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THE OYSTER PIRATES

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THE CAPE YORK KILLER

Murray knew he'd been asleep on his boat when somebody shot the old man. But all the evidence pointed the other way.

FICTION / JOHN P. GILDERS

MURRAY STEPPED lightly from his fishing boat on to the scoured jetty at Point Walter. He tested the ropes. "Generals" had not moved during the night and was secure. He looked towards the town.

"Strange, he thought. There's nobody around."

Murray frowned. He had pulled into Point Walter for steaks. Walrus, his stomach deck hand, was sound asleep in his bunk below. The sun was high now and shone red from the mangroves along the river bank.

Murray licked his dry lips. Docley's pub must be open. He felt inside the pocket of his jeans, and wondered if he could afford a beer.

It was only 10 am, but the brightness of the day made Murray screw up his eyes. Point Walter had one pub, one general store and a dozen ancient iron and weatherbeaten houses scattered around. It was hardly a town at all — just a stopping place for fishing boats operating along Cape York Peninsula.

Murray walked up the wooden steps on to the veranda of Docley's pub. He pushed open the swinging doors. The bar was empty.

"Anybody here?" Murray called.

There was no answer. Murray rubbed his dry lips. Usually there were always a few men in the bar. Point Walter had been a prosperous trading town once, but now it was mainly populated by old age pensioners. The old man could always be found playing draughts at the dilapidated tables.

Murray frowned. The place was like a morgue. Not a sound anywhere. He walked back outside on to the veranda.

He brought out a leather pouch and rolled a cigarette. The paper fluttered from his lips as his grey eyes searched the town.

The North Queensland sun beat down, and heat waves shimmered across the dry, dusty road. The few houses really seemed strangely empty. A dog barked somewhere, but that was all.

Suddenly, Murray saw a man come out of Brennan's General Store about 200 yards away.

The man saw Murray, pointed and yelled. Brennan's Store came to life. A dozen men rushed out onto the street. They all surged towards Murray, their faces grim. Bush Hayes ran into his house and came out with a rifle. He ran towards the hotel, the other men following.

"We got you just in time!" Bush Hayes panted. He pointed the rifle at Murray. "What were you going to do? Rob the pub too?"

Murray blinked. "What are you talking about?"

Hayes held the rifle tight, his fat face glistening with sweat. "We know you killed old Brennan!"

"What?" Murray exclaimed.

"Old Brennan has been shot," another man said.

Murray stared at the man. "I don't believe it!" he blurted out.

"You believe it all right," Docley, the pubman, said coldly. "Come on

We'll get back to the store."

Murray walked quickly down the road, Bush Hayes pointing the rifle at his back. He entered the store and blinked. It was dark and cool inside. It took some time for his eyes to adjust. All kinds of merchandise clattered the floor — buckets, brooms, fishing nets, buoys, cans of paint, tools — old Brennan was the curmudgeon type. Cobwebs hung from the rafters above.

Kern Brennan sat weeping in a corner, old Mrs Hudder comforting her.

Murray walked up to the long counter and looked behind Brennan lay sprawled in a pool of blood, a gaping hole in his chest.

Bush Hayes edged forward. "Shot with his own rifle," he said coldly. "That was smart, Murray."

"I didn't do it!" Murray gasped. "You lay off me, Hayes! I've only been in town a few minutes."

"Your boat came in late last night," Hayes accused. "You could have been here any time early this morning."

"What would I want to kill Brennan for?" Murray bit out. "He was a friend of mine. I've known him for years. Ask Kern."

The girl looked at Kern. She was a pretty, dark-haired girl of 23 with luminous brown eyes. Now they were red with tears. She wore jeans and a man's red and white checked shirt which was tight across her breasts. She swallowed and looked up.

"Yes," she said in a low voice.
"Murray goes on well with Dad. He
wouldn't do anything like that."

"Hush!" Bush Hayes scoffed.

"Did you hear the shot, Karen?"
Murray asked.

"No. I slept at Mrs. Heddle's place
last night."

"Did anybody hear the shot?"

The men looked at each other and
slowly shook their heads.

"It must have happened during
the night," Murray said. "Everybody
must have been asleep. I was on
board my boat."

Bush Hayes walked behind the
counter and searched through
Brennan's pockets.

"What do you think you're doing,
Hayes?" Murray growled. "You
aren't the police."

Hayes looked up angrily. "It'll
take days to get a message to
Cooktown. There's no police here."

He pulled a battered wallet from
the dead man's pocket. He examined
the contents.

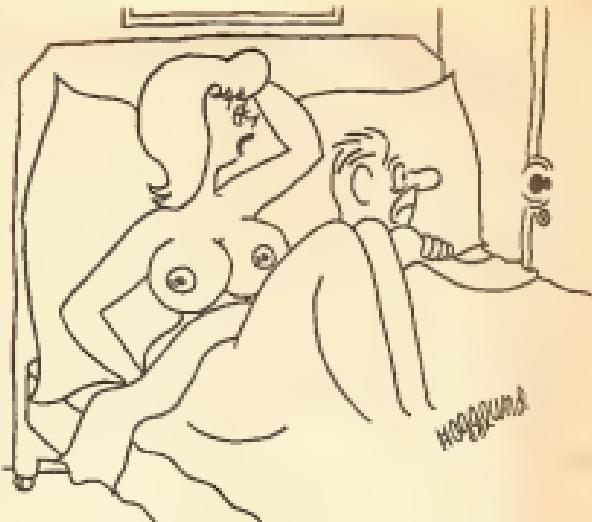
"You must have missed this when
you killed the old man!" Hayes said
triumphantly. He held a cheque in
his hand.

Murray stared at it grimly.

"Insufficient funds," Hayes
glorified. "That's what's stamped on
your cheque, Murray. The last time
you were here you paid the old man
with a rubber cheque."

Hayes handed the cheque to one
of the men. The man took it, passed
it around. The crowd nodded in
agreement.

"Old Brennan wouldn't like that,
Murray. You checked him out of
over \$400. The way I see it, you



"Oh! Looks like my husband is on a search-and-destroy
mission!"

came here last night for more stolen,
had an argument with Brennan over
the cheque, and because he wouldn't
give you any more credit, you shot
him dead."

Murray backed away. "The
cheque shouldn't have bounced," he
said. "Brennan must have presented
it too soon."

"Huh?" Hayes scoffed.

Hayes opened the cash register.
"Empty," he said. "How much did
you get, Murray?"



"I didn't get anything!" Murray
cried. "I was asleep on board my
boat all night!"

Hayes looked at some papers on
the counter next to the cash register.
He flipped through them.

"Hello! What's this?" he ex-
claimed. He held up a list. His dark
eyes burned. "Your name's on top of
this order. Murray is this your
handwriting?"

Murray looked at it. "Yeah," he
said. "I gave that list to Brennan the
last time I was here. It's an old
order."

"Like hell it is!" Hayes growled.
He examined it closely. "The ink is
too fresh. This was written recently.
This is the order you came with last
night!"

Murray glared at Hayes. "You're
full of smart ideas, aren't you,
Hayes? Who do you think you are? A
bloody detective?"

Hayes held up the list, looked at
the men for support. They all
nodded in agreement. All eyes turned
accusatorily towards Murray.

"He done it all right," Dooley
said. He wiped sweat from his brow.

"That's right!" Hayes put in. "It
had to be an outsider. Murray here is
just a drifter. He only calls in every
couple of months or so."

Angry roars were raised on all
sides. The men pressed forward
towards Murray, their faces grim.

"You muddening bastard!" Dooley

Savage fighters of the bush

MOST BUSH CREATURES are timid and panic when threatened, but the kangaroo rat and the native cat will battle fierce fight if cornered.

The kangaroo rat lives in mounds of grass on prairie flats and eats for grain and seeds for a living. But sometimes it goes vegetarian and attacks potatoes and other root-crops.

When threatened by dogs, the 'possum bolts off to the nearest hollow log from which it grows distance at the dogs outside. When small dogs, like fox terriers, growl at it they are nuzzled with teeth and claws.

But nothing is more fierce than a dog than a native cat. Catmen become thoroughly incensed by an trespassing and snarling and will almost tear a building in pieces to get at it.

One man found a native cat high up in an orange tree one morning. One of his dogs was up in the fork of the tree and a second smaller dog was standing on its back, trying valiantly to reach the quarry.

They were probably lucky they could not reach it, however. Its sharp teeth and claws might well have proved a match for them.

spat out. "Brennan was my best friend!"

Murray looked around desperately. This hostile crowd would send him to a pulp. He backed away towards the counter.

"Get him!" Hayes shouted.

Murray jumped back. The crowd charged forward. Murray knew he could expect no help from anybody in Point Walker. The town was isolated, had no direct contact with the outside world.

Murray saw his chance as they jostled one another. He punched Hayes on the jaw and snatched at the rifle. Hayes tried to jerk it out of the way, but he was too late. Murray got possession and pulled the trigger. There was an explosion, lead in the room, and the bullet tore through the roof. Acid gas smoke filled the store. The surging crowd stopped dead in their tracks.

Murray pointed the rifle at them.

"Okay!" he grunted. "That's enough!"

There was absolute silence. The men stood at him, but backed away, afraid.

"I didn't kill Brennan!" Murray shouted. "And I'm not going to get beaten up for nothing! I'm leaving now, and if any of you idiots try to stop me I'll drop you for sure!"

Murray waved the rifle. The men parted, moved aside as he walked towards them. Murray backed carefully towards the door.

He stepped out into the bright sunlight. He fired one more shot into the air and ran quickly down the dusty road.

"Walch! Walch!" Murray shouted as he jumped on board "Emanada."

There was movement from below. Murray cast off the ropes quickly. He

"Boo, sleeping," Walch replied sourly. "What's the matter?"

"Get the bloody motor going!"

Walch walked onto the wheelhouse. The motor whizzed and the dazed motor turned over. Murray ran forward.

"Give her all she's got!" he cried.

Walch blurted, and opened the throttle wide. The fishing boat jolted away from the jetty.

"What's the hurry?" Walch shouted.

"Look back there!"

Walch turned and looked back towards the town. His face turned a dirty grey.

"Crap!" he said. He stared at the armed men running down the road towards the jetty. "What happened?"

Murray came into the wheelhouse. "Old Brennan was murdered," he said. "They think I did it!"

Walch blincked, pursed his thick lips. He looked at Murray, black eyes serious.

"You wouldn't kill anybody, boss," he said.

"Thinking," Murray said seriously. "The trouble is the whole town thinks otherwise."

Murray took the wheel. He looked



"Bottle smashers?"

back anxiously "Emanzide" was in midstream now, well down the creek, but the men had raced out on to the jetty.

A rifle cracked. The bullet hit the iron railing up in the bow and ricocheted off with a long-drawn-out whine.

"That was close!" Murray cried.

Walcha crouched low. Another bullet screamed overhead. Murray dived down behind the wheel, holding it with his left hand.

A bullet shattered the glass overhead. Bits of broken glass flew everywhere. Murray held on to the wheel grimly as a fusillade of shots echoed from the jetty. Bullets thudded into the side of the wheelhouse, and the remaining glass

father I thought if I came away with you on your boat the whole town would know that I had faith in you. I don't expect all this shooting though. What did you do?"

Murray told her. Kern looked anxious.

"What are you going to do?"

"Go back to Cockburn and report what happened."

Kern nodded. "I guess it's the only thing to do," she said.

Murray stared at her. A new thought jumped into his mind.

"Christ!" he said harshly.

"What's the matter, boy?" Walcha asked.

"They'll think we kidnapped her! They'll think we drugged her on board as a hostage! Jesus Christ!"

"I'll let them see me jump overboard and swim for the shore!"

"Yeah!" Murray said automatically. "How about them?"

He pointed to the mud flatland with dark green mangroves. Long, sickly grey shapes lay basking in the sun. One reached its long tail and dithered into the water.

"Oh!" Kern breathed. She stared at the crocodiles silently.

"If anything happens to this boat we're all done for," Murray grunted grimly.

Walcha shuddered. "Crocodiles no good, Mom," he said. He turned and walked quickly below.

An half hour later "Emanzide" approached the Point. Kern was lined up on the headland. Men stood next to them, rifles at hand, waiting.

"Get below!" Murray ordered. Kern ran down the steps to the cabin. A few seconds later she came running back up again, face flushed.

"Walcha's drunk!" she cried. "He's got your rifle and he's running like a madman. He said he'd kill all of them."

"Christ!" Murray groaned. He pulled Kern inside the wheelhouse, his grey eyes hard.

"Steer the boat!" he ordered. "We go and talk to him."

Suddenly the shotgun ran up on deck, whisky bottle in one hand, rifle in the other. His black eyes were dilated. Beads of sweat glistened on his brow.

He glared at the headland and the row of parked vehicles.

"Bastard!" he yelled. "You think you've got us? I'll show you something!"

He hurled the empty whisky bottle into the river. Then he lifted the rifle to his shoulder and pulled the trigger.

The rifle spat flame and men rushed for shelter behind the parked cars.

Walcha laughed triumphantly and fired again and again.

"Stop it!" Murray yelled. "You'll only make things worse."

He tried to leave the wheelhouse but Kern pulled him back. "Don't touch him!" she cried. "He's crazy. He's drunk a whole bottle of whisky."

Murray struggled with her, grabbed her by the shoulder and pushed her away.

The men on the headland were retreating. The rifles cracked and bullets swept the deck. Walcha screamed with pain as a bullet hit him in the chest.

He staggered, shook his fist at the headland. "Bastards!" he yelled.

(Continued on page 58)

Native birds were pest-eaters

LANDHOLDERS NOWADAYS need part company with increased populations of insect pests because of the ill-advised killing of native birds in the past.

For instance, one of the best destroyers of grasshoppers was the plumed parrot, named "bentley" by Captain Cook in 1770.

It has been relentlessly persecuted by pest-hunters and today many people have never seen one.

Woodswallows have also been severely reduced in number by New Australians who regard them as "pests" and shoot for the table.

No longer do they appear in vast flocks as in the past, and the spear-winged plover, though it still roams the cattle paddocks, is now scarce compared with its numbers in the early days.

disintegrated.

Walcha yelled with fear. He jumped up and ran down the steps to the cabin below. Murray gritted his teeth and tried to steer the boat.

Suddenly, the firing stopped. There was an empty silence.

Murray rose cautiously, looked towards the jetty. The men pointed and waved and shouted at the boat. Murray turned his head and gasped with surprise.

Kern Brennan stood on the forward dock, her jeans-clad figure stiff, rigid. Walcha stood next to her looking embarrassed. Kern stared back at the jetty and waved.

The men waved back. The boat was too far away now for voices to carry.

"What are you doing here?" Murray shouted.

Kern turned and walked towards the wheel house, brown eyes unsmiling.

"I didn't like them accusing you in the store," she said. "Nobody noticed, but I left early and got all the way to the jetty."

"What?" Murray groaned. He stared at the soft swell of her breasts against the check shirt. He had never had a woman on board "Emanzide" before.

"I don't believe you killed my

Kern looked startled. "I'll tell them if you all my size," she said. "You don't have to worry."

"Don't have to worry!" Murray growled. "Just look behind you!"

Kern turned and looked back towards the jetty and the town. Dust was rising in a long cloud behind a line of cars and trucks. Their engines made a faint roar in the distance as they headed out along the rutted track.

"What's going on?" Walcha asked breathlessly.

"They're marching for the Point," Murray said grimly. "When the river runs into the sea. You know how narrow that is!"

"Yeah," Walcha breathed, dark eyes wide with fear.

"They'll be close enough to pick us off. Especially me in the wheelhouse."

"Yeah."

Kern clutched at Murray's arm. "I hope it's not my fault," she said fervently.

"They're trying to save you!" Murray growled. "They'll make the bastards more dangerous!"

Kern stared at him, brown eyes agitated.

"I'll jump overboard!" she cried.



VENGEANCE



IN THE SWAMP



Ferris had been roped in to track down the huge jail-breaker and his accomplices in any case. But when they raped his girl, that made it a personal thing . . .

FACT / ROLAND EMEY

FERRIS WAS IN BED with Karen Roberts when the phone rang.

"Let it ring," the girl said. "That's just Hemsky down at the Gandy Spoon waiting me to work tonight. I don't want to work tonight."

"It might be for me," Ferris said. He picked up the phone.

"That you, Dave? It's Morrison here," the other said.

"You're interrupting the hymn singing."

"Stop clowning," Morrison said impatiently. "Styles escaped and made it into the swamp. I'm going to have to go out after him and that means you're going to have to do some tracking for me."

Dave Ferris was the chief law officer for that unstrapped section of the Southwestern United States which included the two-million-acre Great Indian Swamp and the Vansville Prison Farm. Most of the Vansville inmates were men from the towns that encircled the swamp. They were whites, blacks, Indians, over 90 percent of them convicted of some act of violence, usually rape or manslaughter.

Vansville had too many break-outs, and the escapees always plunged into the swamp. They knew they had a good chance of getting lost, getting snake-bitten, or going down for exposure in quicksand, but there was that chance they'd get through.

Morrison had to pursue these men, but wasn't much of a woodsmen. When he had someone important to go after (which meant an escapee convicted of murder), he usually called on Dave Ferris, a professional guide, to help him out.

Herman "King Kong" Styles, the new escapee, was one of a few men at Vansville from another part of the

country built like an ox, Styles had been a genius for an East Harlem-based narcotics organization. He had been sent down to Miami on an assignment but crossed it up. His victim, only wounded, identified him and the subsequent police chase sent Styles racing northwest in a rented car.

By the time he reached the Great Indian Swamp, he had changed cars six times and killed four people. It took Farns two days to locate him in a cave. Morrison and his deputies flushed him out with smoke from a bonfire they set at the mouth of the cave. And he came out shooting and screaming before the four men beat

him to it.

"They're out of my jurisdiction already," Morrison said. "That car's been seen up above the swamp and still heading north."

"Then what's your problem? They're in somebody else's territory."

"Yeah, but Styles isn't with them any more," Morrison said. "They must have dropped Styles off in the swamp somewhere."

"Why would they do that?"

"Well, my guess is they wanted him out of prison, but they couldn't take the chance of bringing him back home yet," Morrison said. "It's a 1300-mile haul and a horse like

this here before," he said, leading Farns and Morrison to the bunkhouse, the smell of whisky heavy on his breath. "Busting in here and waving machine-guns around. They scared the hell out of my boys. Wait till you see me."

They went into the bunkhouse. A hundred or so men were lying on cots, chained by the wrists and ankles.

"The way they were shooting and tooting around," Graves said, "after Styles escaped, we thought we better had to hold them down." There were no sheets or blankets on the mattresses. The air smelled sour and sweaty.

Farns walked through the bunkhouse aisle of the saloon, suspicious faces glowering up at him. All the men knew him some as the guide for summer tourists of the swamp, and others as the police tracker who had helped bring them in. He stopped beside a thin, grey-haired man of 40 with the unmistakable look of an Indian. This was Tommy Boat, whom he'd helped bring in eight years earlier.

"You were here when they took Styles out, Tommy?" Farns asked.

"It ain't easy talking, Dave," the grey-haired man said calmly. "I'm sick." Graves patted and led up down here for no damn reason and won't believe me that I'm sick."

"It's them that was in the panic, not me," Graves shouted. "Seeing all them guns scared the hell out of them. They could have taken the place apart. It took every guard we got here to get them tied down."

"Well, they're quiet enough now, so why don't you start firing them loose," Farns said dismally. "You can start with Tommy here so I can have a talk with him."

Graves took a ring of keys out of his pocket and unchained Boat, who sat up, rubbed his wrists.

A gun pointed his head in the door and spoke to Morrison. "There's a phone call for you, Ike."

Morrison left the building and Farns said, "All right, Tommy, what happened? I've got to go look for the son of a bitch and I want you to give me some kind of clue where he'd be heading."

"All right, there wasn't that much to it. We heard the car coming up and then there was shooting outside and we heard Pud Marby hollering." Marby was the guard who had been killed. "The next thing we knew four of them come busting in here, all of them wearing hats and sunglasses and carrying submachine guns and telling us we'd be all right if we didn't get in their way." (Continued on page 66)

The war against white ants

IN AUSTRALIA'S FAR NORTH the white ants devoured attack every green thing, as well as wooden buildings and tools.

Down in Central Queensland they are not so bad and rarely attack green wood but they are very active in attacking timber houses.

A wood house is a dangerous thing to have in one's backyard — it serves as a base where the insects breed. Then they move to eat up the wood in the house itself.

Even worse is the relentless pile of empty fruit cans outside a green grocery, because Mr. Terence is mad about this class of pest.

Huge forest ant mounds are rare in the lower tropics. Most are small globular nests, and they are quite impervious to the elements and to the tree ants. They are quite vulnerable to man, however. All he has to do is knock a small hole in the side of the mound, fill it with dry grass and keep it dryly heated.

Since the antlion consumes a lot of shredded or recently mashed it takes fire readily and explodes away to fast ash, incinerating the whole colony.

The old house would hit small mounds intact and take them home to be broken up in the food pan. The ants inside made free food for small chicks.

him to the ground, trussed him up like a rodeo bull, and dragged him off.

Styles was tried in the courthouse of a small town named Brissell. Convicted of murder, rape, assault and car theft, he was sentenced to life at hard labor at the Vaseline Prison Farm. He had served just four months when Farns got under the phone call at Brissell from Mr. Morrison that he had escaped.

Farns shouted on the phone, "What do you mean, he escaped? I'd have thought they were keeping him tied down with chains and padlocks."

"They were watching him close enough, Dave," Morrison said. "But they didn't figure on anybody busting him out. Four other hooded men in the big city broke into the bunkhouse after lights out. They killed a guard, got Styles and took off in a car."

"Which way were they heading?" "Heading north."

"Well, that's going to get them out of your jurisdiction pretty fast,

Styles wouldn't be too hard to spot. So I'm guessing he's supposed to hide out until they can figure a way to move him. Now, can you get over here? It ain't healthy with someone like that running around loose."

"All right, I'll be there," Farns said, hanging up. He went back to Karen's bedroom.

"Now where are those damn pants of mine? Morrison needs me out at the Farm," he said.

The Vaseline Prison Farm was 15 miles from Brissell, and it took Farns 40 minutes to reach it over those rutted dirt roads. Morrison was waiting for him along with Jim Graves, the Vaseline superintendent. Morrison was big man, big as Farns himself but thick through the chest and shoulders where the hard-faced grin was longholed and rangy. The superintendent, Graves, was older than both of them by some 20 years. He was a strange man with a drooping Micky mouse and the jumpy hands of a man on the edge of a breakdown.

"Jesus, we never had nothing like

TREES. REVISTED





TREES, REVISITED

I think that I will never see
a girl more lovely in a tree,
a girl who lounges through the day
where tangled branches stir and sway,
a girl who *must* love trees, because
she carries bits of them indoors;
perhaps the trees all love her too,
and, now you've seen her, so might you.



Darling, what big ears you'll have...

Delicate, dainty, shell-like, or long, pale, close-set — forget the face and figure, you can learn a lot more about a girl from her auditory apparatus.

FACT / PAUL BROCK

THE LADIES. Miss 'em, because they are vain, coast on keeping it a secret. No matter how they try, however, they can never feel the really observant male who delights in subjecting his favorite female playthings to the minutest possible scrutiny.

We refer to the shooting and centre fact, confirmed by the world's foremost anatomists, that not one pair of female ears in the world is perfectly matched.

One ear is usually substantially larger than the other and is shaped differently. And here's the interesting blow — they are not placed exactly in the same position on each side of the female head.

This revelation suggests strongly that men who are on the point of being seduced into matrimony by the girl of their dreams ought to hold everything, and take a much closer look at her ears.

Physiognomists (experts on facial contours) report enthusiastically that if the female ears are set well forward the girl is likely to be a homebody, interested exclusively in her man and her children, and always obedient to her revered lord and master.

But here's the rub about female ears — if they are set well back, the poor chap is likely to find that he is stuck with a niggly, constantly yapping shrew, like millions of other luckless males who were never told just how to read a woman's character through her hearing apparatus.

The ears-set-well-back chick will ensnare her man merely because he represents a permanent nest token plus spending money. She is a good-time girl who couldn't care less about her partner's rights, and will make his life miserable till death do part.

At least that's what the physiognomists say when the ears-set-well-back chicks are safely out of bearing.

Some female ears tick to — literally — because they have what doctors call double objective function auricular ears. If you had them, there would be no amusement evident in your expression.

Each ear would tick regularly and merrily about twice a second. You would sound like a walking time bomb.

But men too develop ticking ears occasionally. A North Carolina advertising man had them, and he was 32-years-old before he realized that everybody else's ears were not keeping time with his own.

What has this got to do with a radio and TV network putting ticks tacking ears on a nationwide broadcast?

Several doctors proposed operating, but the patient turned them down. "I like my epiphysodic constellations," he said, "and I hope my steppin' rastachian tubes never get tired. I'd be lost without them."

Italian craniologist Bruno Longobucco, who did a lifetime's study of the shape and position of male and

female ears, taught that "dreadful" or pointed ears, and those with no lobes, indicate nymphomania in women and promiscuous tendencies in men. Such ears, he said, belong to bigamists of both sexes, who find no trouble at all in fascinating a mate and coaxing him or her to bed.

The sex symbolism of ears is based on the fact that these organs represent both a projection from the body and an opening into it. Thus the ear as a symbol is bisexual, representing male and female genital organs, active and passive.

For centuries folklore has assigned sexual prowess by the size, shape and position of the ears. Impregnation of the female by way of the ear is mentioned in many ancient legends as in the case of the sacred crocodile of Egypt, and the Buddha's mother, Maya. Early Christian writings and medieval art represent conception, with the male organ taking the form of a bird, through a virgin's ear. In some legends birth also takes place via the ear.

Ear-readers believe intellect is governed by the size of brain you have at the front of your head, and emotion by the size at the back. To get a good reading they measure how far away the ears are from the brainbox or emotional barometer.

They also believe that plenty of head height above the ears is a sign of intelligence, idealism, and artistic leanings. Passionate people, besides having their ears set well forward, also have them set fairly high on the head. The great lovers of history, it is claimed, all possessed these ear characteristics.

The shape and size of a woman's



Farrah Fawcett's ears — small, shell-like, and well back on her head.

Ears are claimed to be infallible guides to the eternal question of will she or won't she. If her dimpled small or what's known as "shell-like", she won't — not without massive performance in the form of bribes, bubbles and outrageous flattery.

Small shell-like ears belong to girls with selfish, intolerant and play-fight-to-get tastes. "Sign on the dotted line first" is the cold unfeeling message these auditory masterpieces would convey if they could talk as well as hear.

Ears with lobes that are red and strong belong to warm, stay affectionate females indicated in both equality and total togetherness of the sexes. Red lobes usually go with generous loving lips and distinctly embracable contours. Their owners are rarely snakes, and the male who knows them first is in for a delicious and long-lasting experience.

Straight and fairly narrow ears usually belong to females with great pride, courage and positive aspirations. Severe defiance is secondary with them. Romantic love, charity, loyalty and generosity in everything but physical touch are traits they hold dearer, even, than greatest male admiration.

Very pale ears belong to dreamers and home-and-husband lovers.

Ears that stick out betray the flighty from pleasure-and-loot rocker.

Closely set ears go with the up-right clinging vine type.

(Continued on page 46)



TOP RIGHT
Charles Grodin's ears — large and Andie MacDowell's ears

LEFT
Suzanne Somers has large, rounded ears which meet just below her hairline.



The spy who knew too much

Major Subic's war memoirs were likely to reveal too much for the world's good. It would be safer for everybody concerned if he let sleeping dogs lie...

FICTION / EDWARD D. HOCH

"WHAT DO you know about Major Gregory Subic?" Hastings asked, pouring two glasses of wine from the decanter in his study.

Rand, who was unaccustomed to the luxury of a dinner with his commanding officer, accepted the glass and took a sip before replying. "When I started in the Department of Covert Communications, he was something like a god, or at least a founding father. There's a photograph of him, taken with Churchill, still hanging in my office. Is he still alive?"

Hastings nodded. "He's alive, living in Canada, writing his memoirs."

Rand gave a low whistle. "That's a book I'll want to read!"

"Unfortunately the British Government is not quite so eager. In fact, the publication of the book could provoke a serious diplomatic incident."

"In what way?"

Hastings pinched his lips dubiously. "What I am telling you is quite confidential, known only to a few top people."

"I understand." Rand took another sip of the wine.

"Major Subic was a front-line intelligence officer in Burma until he was wounded and shipped back to London. Here he became one of our

top cryptanalysts during the final days of the Second World War. In fact, he headed the department which has since developed into your own Double-C, as you well know."

"Just after the Battle of the Bulge, Subic succeeded in deciphering a particularly important Nazi communication. It seemed that some German generals, always unhappy with Hitler, agreed to meet secretly with a former leader of the French Underground. The French leader was to fly to Berlin with General Hans Holder, for a conference on ending the war."

"This was the situation which confronted British Intelligence as the result of Subic's decipherment: they had the exact route and time-table of the German bomber carrying a top Nazi general and a highly respected French resistance leader. The mission of the Frenchman might end the war sooner, but Intelligence doubted its chances for success."

"Stacked against this was the fact that General Holder had helped plan Nazi strategy in the Bulge and might do the same thing again. It was a matter of one Frenchman's life against the lives of thousands of Allied soldiers."

"What are you trying to tell me?" Rand asked, fuming a sudden chill.

The older man shrugged. "The



RAF was ordered to intercept and shoot down the plane. They did so, very efficiently. General Holder was killed. And of course, the Frenchman, Andre Chambois, died too."

"Chambois," Rand repeated the name. "I see. If I remember correctly, he was as expected to De Gaulle at the time."

Hastings nodded. "And Holder was as useful as Chambois. What would you have done under the circumstances?"

"I don't know," Rand admitted.



"I'm glad the decision wasn't mine to make."

"The incident became one of the footnotes of history," Hastings went on. "It was something of a national tragedy for the French. Naturally, we never estimated prior knowledge of the plane's occupants. It was simply written off as one of the fortunes, or misfortunes, of war."

"And what happened to Major Sabot?"

"Frankly, I believe he went to peace over the incident. As you

know, the European war ended on early May of 1945. About that time we heard a rumor that someone — perhaps Chamberlain — had survived the crash. Sabot went to West Germany to investigate, but of course there was no truth to it. Chamberlain was dead and buried, and I think the shock of actually seeing his grave was a bit too much for Sabot. In any event, he never returned to London. He resigned his commission and moved to Canada. He's been there ever since."

"And now he's writing his memoirs."

"Exactly. An American publishing house approached him some months back and made him a very liberal offer. In fact, they were so anxious to get the book they paid him a large advance before he'd written a single word. We can only suspect they have some knowledge of the bombshell such a book could be. You see, right now our relations with France are improving and with all this Common Market business we can't risk raising

that I know it was twenty-five years ago, but the French have long memories. Can you imagine the uproar in Paris if it was revealed that Randa deliberately and knowingly caused the death of a French hero?"

"Can't you stop him from having the book published?"

"Not officially. We don't dare, but we're concerned, or the American publisher would be more certain than ever that they're on to something big. That's where you come in, Randa."

Randa smiled slightly. "I know we'd get to me."

"You must fly to Toronto and talk to him. He'll respect you, because you hold the closest thing to the position he held during the war. Bring him to his senses, even promise him money if you have to. Whatever else he writes about, he must not mention the Charbois affair."

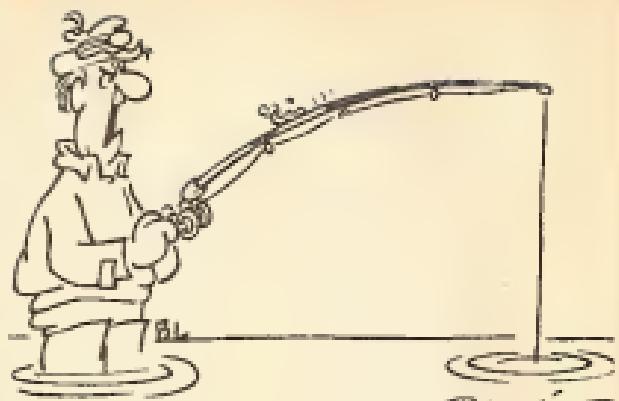
"And if he won't listen?"

Hastings shrugged. "It's one man against the good of a nation."

Randa felt his face flush. "I'm damned if I'll act as your assassin."

"Randa, Randa — I meant no such thing!"

"All right," Randa said. "I've always wanted to visit Canada."



"Go back to the book!"

The next morning, in his office, Randa studied the photograph of the handsome, dark-haired man standing at the side of Weston Church — a hero then, but now only an old man who knew too much.

* * *

The Jumbo Jet from London settled down to a perfect landing at Toronto International Airport, and Randa passed quickly through the customs formalities. His hotel was downtown, across the street from the new City Hall, a striking structure with twin curving towers flanked by a walk and sheltering trees. Randa Randa studied it through the window as he unpacked, then telephoned the man he was to meet — a library agent named Norman Browder.

They arranged to meet for dinner, and Randa killed the intervening hour with a stroll through downtown in the warmth of July sunshine. Despite some of the place names he had seen on the way in from the airport — Dickens Street and Princess Margaret Park and Gloucester Street — he felt that Toronto was more an American city than the London he'd left. There were occasional hints of the old, but only, it seemed, as an accent to the new.

The agent, Browder, was one of the new. He was a small man with a sharp, energetic and quick nervous eye, and he seemed to know his business well. He was uncertain about the wages ransom for Randa's visit, and he spoke as if he could feel his commission slipping away with every sentence.

"If you want to see Major Sabre about British rights to his book, I'm the man to deal with. He picked me out of the phone book after the New York publishers came to see him. I'm handling all business matters."

"It's more a personal matter," Randa assured him. "I have a job quite similar to Major Sabre's old position in London."



"I hope you are better at making wars, General."

Tasmania's oldest inhabitant

IN THE ICY MOUNTAIN pools of Tasmania lives the little shrimp Anaspidea, which many scientists believe to be the oldest kind of animal life existing in the world today.

Zoologists first identified and described Anaspidea in 1892. They were astonished to find that the shrimp had a straight back, unlike every other known present day species.

The only related shrimps appear to be a family found in European and American fossils from the carboniferous era — millions of years even before the dinosaurs appeared. But the type had long been extinct everywhere in the world — except Tasmania.

Known to Tasmanians as simply the "mountain shrimp", Anaspidea lives today in the numerous mountain pools of Mount Wellington and the Maria Mountains. They grow to about two inches in length, and live on mosses and small water creatures. They cannot survive in warm brackish waters.

Scientists believe Anaspidea has survived because its environment has remained virtually unchanged for millions of years. It is the ruling species of its cold world, with plenty of food and no natural enemies.

So far Anaspidea has devoured the giant amphipods and the diatoms. It may even eat man.

The small man's eyes widened. "You mean, you're a spy?"

"No more than Major Subic was. We work with codes and concealed messages, got with people."

"I tell you, Subic is one tough customer! He trusts nobody. At first he didn't even want to do the book. I don't think he'd have agreed to it yet, except that he needs the money. He was teaching languages at the University, but he's too old for that now."

"I've talked with tough customers before," Rand said.

"Fine! Then I'll drive you out to his apartment. It's on Scarborough Bluffs, overlooking Lake Ontario. A fine location, right next to the Hunt Club's private golf course. He wants to keep that sort of life more than anything, but he needs money to do it."

Major Subic greeted them at the door of his apartment. He was a white-haired man of 65 or so with thin hands and pale frightened eyes. His wrinkled skin was tanned from the summer sun, but it was a sickly tan. There was no longer any evidence of the vigorous, dark-haired Englishman who had stood at Churchill's side so many years before. Even the eyes were different now, older, more weary.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Major," Rand said, extending his hand. "Your techniques are still highly regarded in London."

Subic avoided firmly in response and motioned them to seats by the window. Out across the lake they could see scattered yachts drifting with the evening breeze.

"I am pleased to meet you too, Mr. Rand," Subic said, "but you must excuse me if I put you to a little test.

the following for me, H-21, Professor Zapp, and 0073."

Rand grunted, looking a bit like a schoolboy. "Professor Zapp was the German technician who perfected and simplified the microdot during the early days of the Second World War. And 0073 was the German diplomatic code in which the famous Zimmerman telegram of World War I was sent."

"Very good! But I believe you neglected H-21."

"That was the German designation for one of their most famous spies — Mata Hari."

Major Subic relaxed in his chair, apparently satisfied. "Now we can talk," he said. "But first I must give my completed manuscript to Mr. Brewster." He produced a bulky folder of typewritten sheets. Take the back and read it. We don't need you here."

"I need him to get me back downtown," Rand said.

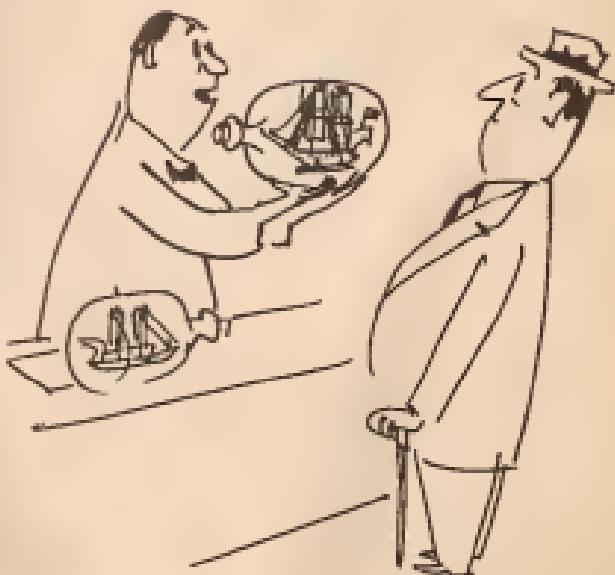
"I'll call a taxi for you." Subic waved a hand and the little spud retreated, the thick manuscript tucked under his arm. When they were alone, Subic poured two glasses of brandy and passed one to Rand. "Now tell me what you really want," he said.

Rand cleared his throat, not

In this business one does not reach my age without being careful. You could be an assassin from across the sea, sent to kill me."

Rand saw that the man was serious. He really feared for his life. "I'm hardly that I have identification..."

"Papers can be so easily forged these days, Mr. Rand. If you are who you claim, certainly you can identify



"This one's \$495 — plus 5c deposit on the bottle . . ."

knowing exactly how to put it. "Frankly, Major, there is some concern in London about your forthcoming book. They fear you may be inclined to discuss the Chamber matter in the closing days of the war."

The old man seemed to grow a shade whiter. "I understand their concern," Sabre answered slowly, picking his words with care. "But the book deals mainly with my youth and later years in Canada. There is very little of the wartime years, and nothing that is not a matter of public record."

"Won't that disappoint your publisher? He isn't paying all the money for boyhood memories."

the more unlikely it seemed.

Rand spent the rest of the evening exploring downtown Toronto, marvelling at the number of cinemas, at the swarms of young people who crowded the sidewalks. It was not too different from Times Square or Piccadilly on a summer's night, he decided.

Back at his hotel, slipping into bed just after midnight, he was startled by a tapping on the door. "Who's there?" he asked, opening it just a crack.

A slim young girl with long blonde hair and a smiling mouth stood there. "Please let me in — I must talk to you!"

Wingen—the burning mountain

THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT is formed of old, stable rocks, and there are no active volcanoes south of New Guinea. But early settlers believed they had found one north-west of Newcastle in 1825.

When the settlers had seen Mount Wingen, also known as Burning Mountain — which contains a mass of stone burning red.

The coal is part of the famous Greta Basin, the source of some of Australia's taxes, and Professor Edgeworth David investigated the phenomenon in 1909, and stated that the coal was forming at a depth of about 1500 feet below ground level.

Edgeworth David estimated that the mass had been slowly burning away for about 10,000 years. His theory was that it was originally started by spontaneous combustion.

The fire is eating its way along the mass at a rate of about three feet every year. After about 1860 the quantity of smoke gradually increased as the fire travelled south, but it flared up again in 1912. Huge quantities of smoke spewed out of the mountain's crevices during the 1920s.

Today the fire has diminished, but it is still burning on a face about 60 feet wide. Some of the stones on the surface are white hot, and pure yellow sulphur has accumulated in the sides of the vent.

Geologists expect that the fire will finally die out when it reaches the centre of Mount Blugger. But that will probably not be for a good many centuries yet!

"No," Sabre admitted, "he isn't. I believe he heard the rumors about Chamberlain from one of the R.A.F. pilots who flew the mission — at least, that's what he told me. They thought I'd have the full story, so they came to me. But, believe me, I go into no great detail about it. The British Empire is in no way compromised."

There might have been a sudden trace to his voice, but Rand chose to ignore it. He didn't really like the man, and that fact vaguely disappointed him. "London will be pleased," he said simply.

He stayed another half-hour, discussing the attractions of Canadian living, and then rode back downtown in a taxi. Sabre surprised. It had all been so easy — perhaps too easy. Would Sabre really have glossed over an incident so staggering to him that he'd left his job and country because of it? The more Rand thought of it,

Rand, acquainted with the techniques of call girls who worked the big hotels, hesitated. "I think you have the wrong room, Miss."

"You're Mr. Rand, aren't you? From London? I've been waiting for you all evening." She seemed close to tears. "For Majora Fleming, Mr. Brewster's secretary."

More curious than anything else, Rand opened the door. "All right," he called when she was seated in the room's only chair. "What's this all about?" Did Brewster send you here?"

She shook her head, and in the light from the bedside lamp he saw that she was quite pretty, with soft pink skin just beginning to acquire a sunburnt tan. "He doesn't know I came. But I overheard him arranging to meet you, and I know you're a British agent of some sort. I'm afraid for him, Mr. Rand."

He sat down on the edge of the bed. "Afraid?"

"I suppose I should start with my boy friend Terry. He's an American who came up here to escape the draft. He lives with some other American boys, and he's taking a writing course at the University. His teacher is a woman named Iris Montauk. She's older, around 50, and she knows just about everyone. She speaks to a lot of the youth groups around Toronto."

"Anyways, last week Terry happened to suggest to her what I'd mentioned about Major Sabre's book. She told him Sabre's life could be in danger, and my boss's too! She and some people from the past night not the idea of him writing a book of memoirs."

"Major Sabre was engaged in cryptography. It's hardly a lot of work to impede murder after so many years."

"I don't know, but that's what she told Terry!"

"Are you in love with this Terry?"

She twirled her hands nervously. "We'd be married if it wasn't for my family. They call him a hippie because he has a long..."

"Well, I think you're worrying needlessly, Miss Fleming. But if it'll make you feel better, I'll talk to Terry's teacher, this Iris Montauk."

"Oh, thank you! I know a British agent could help us."

Rand smiled and let her out. Then he sank into bed, wondering about Iris Montauk and her connection with Major Sabre's past.

The University of Toronto was deep into its summer sessions and Rand found the dormitory campus alive with students. He had arranged to meet Iris Montauk on the grassy quadrangle off King's College Road, and he found it a pleasant sunny place that reminded him of the little squares so common to British schools. He was studying the old stone buildings with their narrow windows when Iris Montauk approached.

"You're Mr. Rand?" she asked. She was a striking woman who obviously took pains about her appearance, and each glancing her was exactly in place. He thought she'd probably been beautiful once.

"Do I look that much different from your students?" he asked.

"Quite a bit, actually," she said with a smile. "I'm Iris Montauk. You wanted to see me?"

"I'm over from London for a few days," he explained. "I understand you have a student named Terry in one of your writing classes."

(Continued on page 69)



The time of the catfish

The devastating natural disasters which have shattered Japan more and more frequently through the years are now feared more than a nuclear war.

FACT / GENE JAMES

"THE JAPANESE people are infinitely more terrified of the catfish than they are of the atomic, hydrogen, or even the cobalt bomb."

The above statement was made recently by a man who has spent the major part of his life in Japan, who has a Japanese wife, and who, although a former POW who was subjected to all the usual horrors of Japanese instrument, can still find it in his heart to love both the Japanese and their beautiful country.

The writer first discovered, after questioning better than a score of people — both Australians who have lived in Japan and Japanese nationals themselves — that this amazing and seemingly absurd allegation was, and is, completely accurate and without embellishment of any kind.

For to the Japanese "catfish" means earthquake. And Japan has experienced more mass-horror, misery, and mass-death than any other nation in the world, because its islands happen to be situated over a whole series of geographical faults and permanent seismic disturbances.

Japanese mythology, like their Shinto religion, is an effect a detailed catalog of spirits of all types, shapes, and kinds.

These spirits abide literally everywhere — in trees, within rocks, inside dogs, cats, frogs, snakes, even cockroaches. But the most feared spirit of all is that of the "quake catfish, of *fukin*, as the Japanese call their earthquakes.

According to Japanese mythology, a huge catfish lies beneath the ground, and in every tremor, its sluggish tumor, produces movements of the earth. These expanding ripples of shock can either rattle the family crockery or knock buildings

according to the giant creature's whim.

This subterranean monster is supposedly controlled by a rice-stone, situated in the precincts of the Kintomo Shrine in Hitaishi Province.

Many centuries ago, according to legend, a lord of the Moto clan tried to search out and then destroy the stone. He hoped that by doing so he might bring an end to the curse of the "quakes," but after many adventures he failed to accomplish his task.

But if the "quake catfish" is a myth, the earthquake itself most certainly is not, and as stated the national terror for it surpasses all others. And with excellent reason.

In the last six centuries Japan has experienced 13 major earthquakes and tidal wave-storming from them. And the fact the people of Nippon find most alarming is that out of that fatal dozen, six have occurred since 1923, and the last four since 1948 — indicating an actual weakening of the crust in our globe's volcanic belt. Such a geological structural change, if it exists, may well be eventually fatal to Nippon.

In a single decade, between 1923 and 1933, the Japanese Central Meteorological Observatory registered 21,845 tremors — all strong enough an intensity to be felt by people.

Using these figures as a base, the possibility of Japan suffering the fate of Atlantis, that mysterious continent that disappeared in some great and ancient cataclysm, is not entirely a far-fetched suggestion. If the pattern of the great "quake" convulsions it may well become a dreadful reality.

Of the last six upheavals, by far the most disastrous was the one

known as "The Great Kanto Earthquake." It struck, completely without warning, on a Saturday morning September 1, 1923.

The half-holiday had started in a festive spirit in Tokyo. Public offices, banks and shops were just about to close, and places of entertainment and relaxation were just beginning to open in preparation for the weekend holiday crowds. As the clock-hands pointed to 11:58 am a rumbling sound like some gigantic fast approaching train filled the air with shuddering vibrations.

It was followed immediately by a series of sharp, vertical earthquake shocks, lifting the earth's crust and then dropping it.

"Jishin! Jishin!" The dreaded warning for earthquakes sounded on the lips of millions throughout the cities of Tokyo and Yokohama.

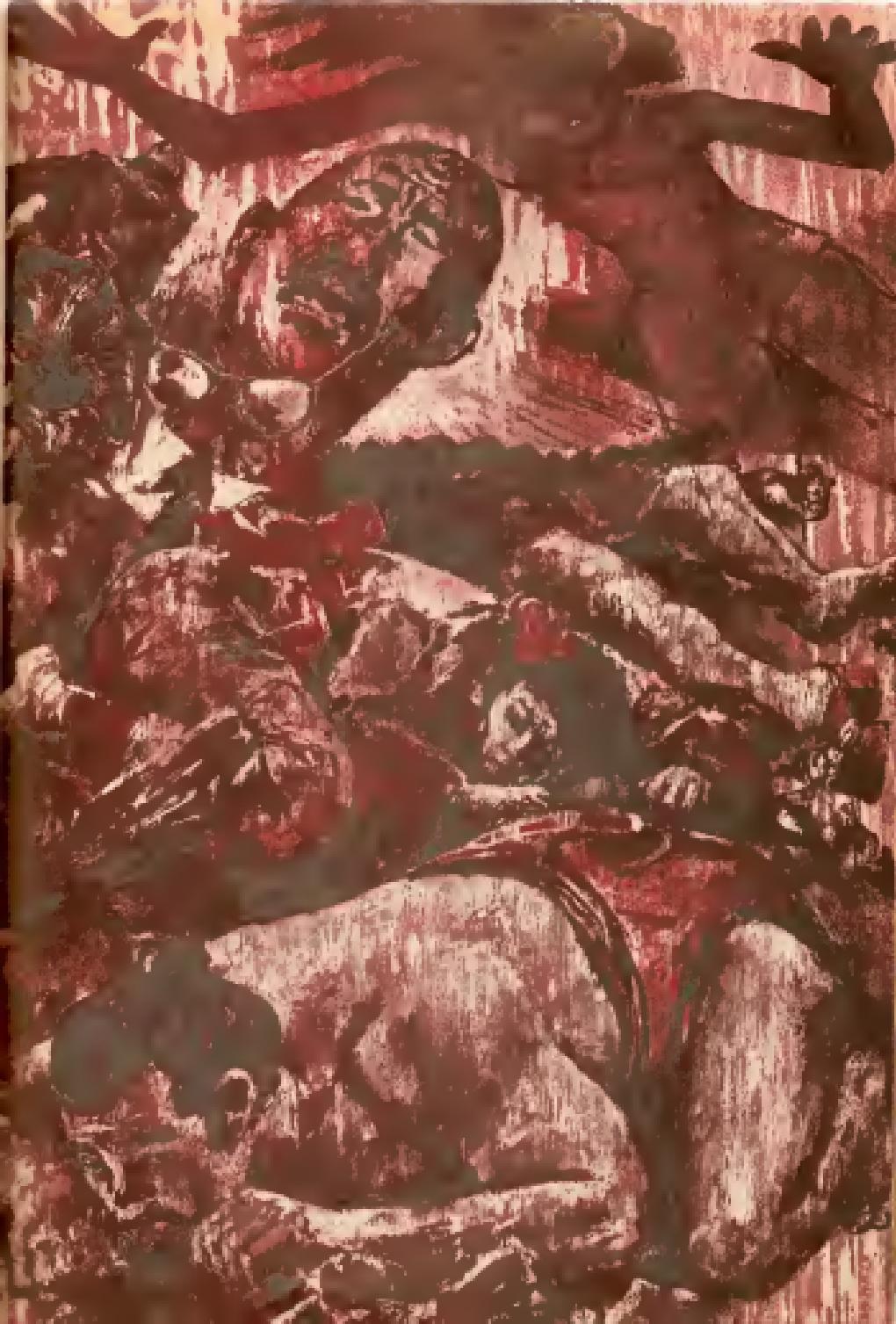
Within seconds, the heaving earth reduced brick and stone buildings to heaps of rubble, burying thousands. People huddled in the streets beneath a burning sun, and remained there under the stars through the clear and chilly autumn night.

Occasionally showers drenched them, but there was no let-up or respite from their nightmare orbital. Great shocks continued to be felt throughout the day, keeping the terrified crowds out in the open away from any buildings.

The shocks continued right through until September 18. The total number recorded was 1619.

The first shocks were followed by raging fires which completely gutted Yokohama and destroyed half of Tokyo. In Tokyo alone, 366,262 houses were destroyed.

(Continued on page 7d)



THE OYSTER PIRATES

Barton masterminded the deal. He knew a lot about the oyster business. But that was all he knew. FICTION / C. H. CHRISTIE

I DIDN'T LIKE Barton at the first place. I should never have made that illegal oyster deal with him, but it seemed so good at the time and I was just about broke.

I had been trawling for prawns in the deep just outside Townsville, and the refrigeration unit in my boat had broken down. Barton was a refrigeration mechanic. In fact, Barton was a lot of things: He was in the oyster business down in Sydney and his father had leases on the Hawkesbury River. He knew all about the oyster market and I couldn't help but be interested when he suggested the deal.

We stood in the public bar of the Criterion Hotel and walked down a couple of beers.

"I tell you, Doyle, I've never seen

oysters like them before," he said enthusiastically.

He was always enthusiastic. He talked too much. He was of average height, about 20, with sandy yellow hair and pale blue eyes. When he got excited I swear his eyes used to change color — become a deeper shade of blue.

"Yeah?" I said sceptically.

"Yeah," Barton asserted. "Look, Doyle. I've fixed your refrigeration unit. Your boat is ready for sea. Now how about it?"

"It's too far," I replied. "I've been around the top into the Gulf a few times, but Bougainville... You must be joking!"

"It's not Bougainville," Barton explained. "It's Terra Island."

"Yeah. But it's still in the

Solomon Islands and damn ed a expensive. We'd never make a profit out of it. Besides, it's illegal. The administration won't grant permits for that area."

"Forget about the bloody administration. I tell you, they're a special kind of oyster. They're huge — as big as a soccer. I've never seen oysters like them before. Something must have happened on that island to make those oysters grow so big. They'll retail at three dollars a dozen in Sydney."

"Hell!" I said. "Who's going to pay three dollars a dozen for your oysters when the local brand sell for 45 cents a bottle?"

Barton stared at me, his pale blue eyes hard.

"I know the oyster business," he



bit cost. "You know the power business. People pay more for oysters on the shell, because they're considered a luxury. Those oysters will sell to the big hotels. They'll be a novelty."

I shrugged. The powers had not been running well lately and I was broke. Esmeralda, my trawler, had cost me a bundle in repairs. I owed Smiley, my half-Aboriginal mate, six weeks back money. This proposition was illegal, but...

"I'll pay for the oil and all the equipment we'll need," Barton said. "We go fifty-fifty on the deal. How about it?"

"How do we get the oysters down to Sydney?"

"We'll come back to Townsville," Barton replied. "The first batch will go by freight. The rest will go by refrigerated road transport."

I thought for a few seconds more. I didn't like the bastard, but I was desperate for money.

"Okay," I said.

* * *

Esmeralda headed out to sea, her bow dipping into the slight swell. We passed Magnetic Island and the water became a deeper blue. It wasn't long before we were dodging the coral outcrops of the Great Barrier Reef.

The Reef always fascinated me.

Twelve hundred miles long, and the greatest stretch of coral in the world. I'd fished around the Reef for years and it had been kind to me.

When the powers stopped running, I always managed to get a mate from the touring waters of the Reef. Fish were plentiful there and easily caught.

Smiley was at the wheel. A raw-boned half-caste with the low, flat forehead of the Australian Aboriginal, he always had a grin on his thick lips.

"How you going, Smiley?" I asked.

Smiley waved his hand at the sparkling blue sea.

"This is the life, boss," he said. "Better than working for those bloody cow cooks!"

I had picked Smiley up one Saturday night in Townsville about six months ago. He was lying in the gutter, dead drunk. I got him on to my boat to let him sleep it off.

When he came to, he was fascinated with Esmeralda. He had been working on a cattle station out West and was tired of the heat and dust of the island.

I took an immediate liking to Smiley. He was intelligent and was good company. He wanted to come out on a prawning run and after a

week that was it. He was part of the outfit now.

Barton didn't like Smiley. But then Barton didn't like anything. He was sea sick, and spent most of his time in his bunk.

Presently he staggered up on deck, his face pale. His sandy hair was rumpled and he had been sleeping in his clothes.

"How long will it be now?" he muttered.

"A couple of days."

"Jesus!" he groaned. He stared at the flat sea vacantly. "I've never been out on a small boat like this before."

"She's a good boat, mate," Smiley said. "You must have a sensitive stomach."

"Shut up!" Barton growled.

He stood silent at the horizon, clutching the bridge rail. I walked over to him. I smelled whisky on his breath.

"How did you find out about Toraki Island?" I asked.

Barton mimicked. "My old man was up in Townsville during the war. He was an engineer. He brought back some oyster shells and he's been talking about them ever since. He's always been in the oyster business. He told me Toraki Island was the most fantastic place he'd ever seen.



The oysters grow on the mangroves in millions."

"Huh," I said.

"My old man is financing this deal," Barton confirmed. "He's determined to exploit those big oysters. He reckons there's a fortune to be made. It'll be something new."

I followed Smiley at the wheel and Barton staggered down the steps to his bunk.

"What do you think of him, Smiley?" I asked.

Smiley grunted. "He's a weak bastard," he said. "He drinks too much. Did you see the case of whisky he bought on board?"

"Yeah," I said heavily.

* * * * *

These days later Edmunds lay at anchor just inside the reef at Torok Island. The sun shone from a blistering sky. Palm trees stood silent around the lagoon, and the thick jungle shimmered with the afternoon heat.

I had on a pair of shorts cut down from old jeans. I wore stained tennis shoes and nothing else. Smiley was also in shorts, barefoot.



"Oh, the drink wasn't THAT bad."

Barton came up on deck dressed like a missionary. He wore light grey pants and a conservatively white shirt and tie.

"Christ!" I said. "Where are you going? To a dance or something?"

"I'm going to talk to the booms," he said harshly. "They expect a white man to look decent."

I shrugged. We roved about on the deck and walked towards the native village with a horde of various natives at our heels. Thatched huts covered a cleared patch of jungle. Smoke from fires spiralled slowly into the still air.

Bare-breasted women looked coyly at the ground as we walked past. The men stared at us curiously. Colorful tapa cloth wrapped around their hips.

I noticed that these natives were different to the New Guinea types. Their skin is black, whereas the New Guinea native is brown. Their fuzzy hair was all short.

The head man came out from the largest hut. He was a fine-looking fellow, grey-haired, about 30 years of age. He had on a pair of white shorts and a white shirt. He wore no shoes.

"You talk-talk English?" Barton asked in an attempt at jargon.

"Yes," the head man said in perfect English. "I went to a mission school on Bougainville. What can I do for you?"

Barton looked surprised. Smiley grunted.

"We want labor to collect oysters from the mangroves on Torok Island. We've got trade goods and tobacco to pay for it."

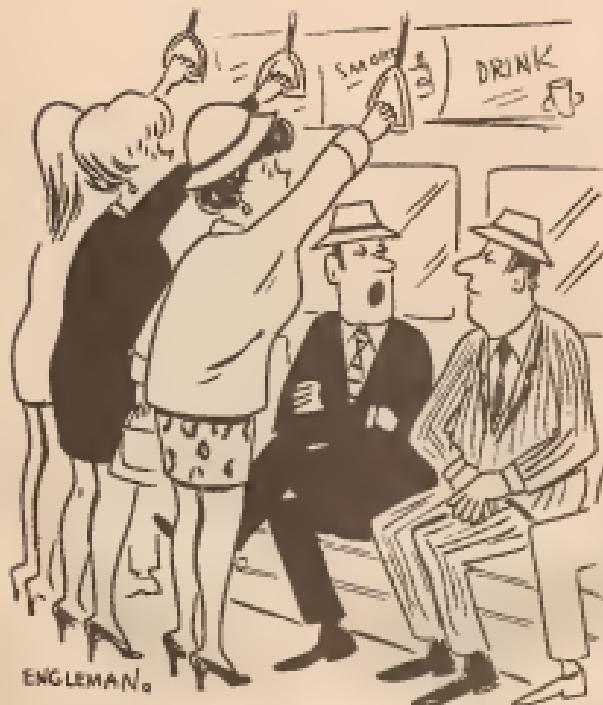
The head man frowned, deep in thought. At last he spoke. "We don't want trade goods. We want money—Australian dollars."

Barton was silent. He had met his match here. He bit his lip. "How much?" he asked.

"Four dollars a day."

Barton looked grim. As he was financing the whole deal I kept out of it. I knew he had an educated native to wrangle with and this guy was asking for top money.

I left them to thrash it out. I wandered around with Smiley inspecting the village. After two



"I think women's lib for one thing, I don't feel guilty any more."

Building the "Rum Hospital"

IN THE EARLY COLONIAL DAYS there was a great shortage of currency for exchange in New South Wales, and rum was one of the staples of the barter economy which covered for the settlement's first 26 years.

The "Rum Hospital" was built by Dr Amy Woodworth, Alexander Riley and Charles Russell between 1811 and 1814 as a direct result of this traffic in liquor.

The partners offered to build a two-storey hospital 287 feet long and 28 feet deep, to be "one of the finest public buildings in any of His Majesty's colonies".

In return they requested the right to import 45,000 gallons of rum and dispose of it within three years — which amounted to a virtual monopoly of the rum trade.

The Government agreed to their terms, and got their hospital. The authorities did not have to prevent the partners with anything except 20 cows, 20 draught bullocks and 20 convict labourers.

The "Rum Hospital" building still stands. It is now occupied by the NSW State Parliament.

hours, I came back.

Barton was squatting in the hut with the head man, an empty whisky bottle by his side. The head man was drunk. His black eyes rolled when I walked inside.

Barton laughed contemptuously.

"We've settled on two dollars a day for men, one dollar for women," he said. "Plus a bottle a day for the chief here. How about that?"

* * *

Barton treated the natives like dirt. He forced all the young men and young women available. He gave them buckets and a machete. They waded around among the mangroves cutting the huge stems from the trees, dropping them into the floating buckets.

The stems were then taken out to Esmeralda by dugout and packed into the refrigerated hold. It was hot, really work.

After a couple of days Barton caught one young native resistance on a small sandy beach.

"Get back to work, you lazy bastard!" Barton yelled.

The native jumped to his feet and glared at Barton. Barton walked forward and booted the man on the buttocks. The native picked up his machete and swang it wildly.

Barton drew a .38 revolver from the holster he always wore buckled to his waist. The native backed away, fear and hatred in his black eyes.

"Get back to work, you lazy scum!" Barton yelled.

I ran quickly along the beach towards him.

"Take it easy, Barton!" I cried. "That's the chief's gun!"

Barton swung around, his face red. "I don't care who it is! These boozers just won't work! I'm paying them two dollars a day and they're going to screw it!"

I smelled the whisky then. Barton had been drinking. His blue eyes were bloodshot and his face was

drunk. His sandy hair was matted with sweat. He had on a khaki shirt and khaki pants and great patches of sweat showed at his armpits and down his back.

"Take it easy," I suggested.

The native picked up his bucket and ran off to join the others hacking coconuts from the mangroves.

"Go to hell, Doyle!" Barton snarled. He stalked off angrily towards the village.

The climate of Torako Island was hot and humid. It rained every afternoon at about 1 o'clock, great sheets of water flooding down from the sky. Barton wouldn't let the natives shelter from the rain. He shouted and yelled at them to keep working and keep the coconuts flowing into the hold.

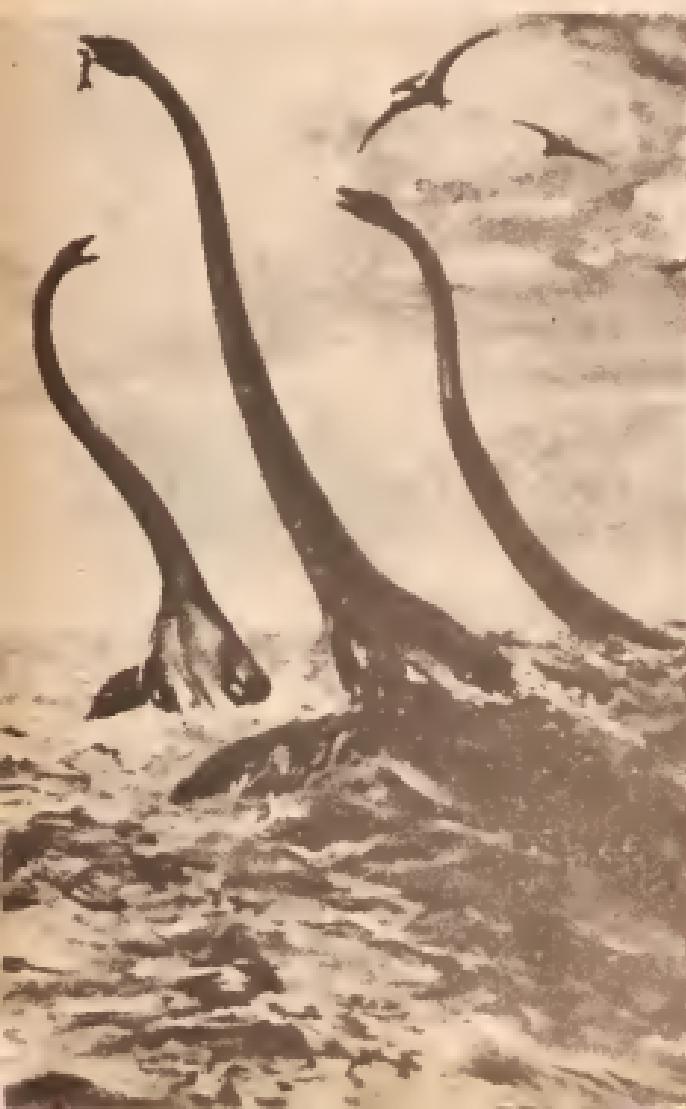
When the sun came out again, steam rose from the surrounding jungle. It was his living in a sauna bath.

The nights were hot and clammy. I lay in my bunk aboard Esmeralda and listened to the crocodiles grunting in the distance. I could not sleep. I smoked cigarette after cigarette, and wondered if the chief over in the village would let Barton continue to abuse his people.

The days passed and nothing happened.

(Continued on page 67)





Seamen have been reporting sightings of unknown monsters for hundreds of years. Are ALL their stories hoaxes or mistakes?

FACT / RICHARD INNES

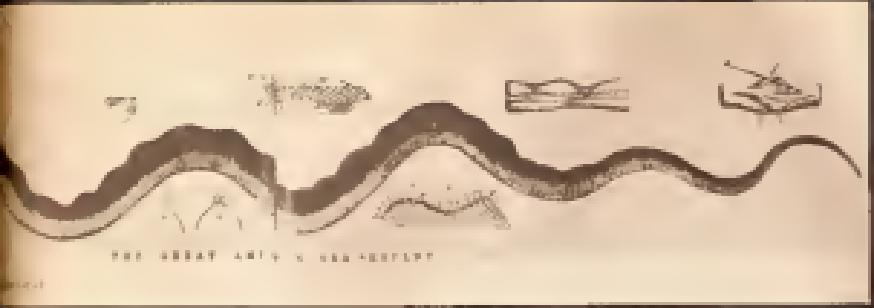
ON FEBRUARY 4, 1963, a young French photographer suddenly landed on the front pages of newspapers all around Australia. The photographer, Robert Le Serrac, claimed he had seen a serpent-like sea monster 30 feet long at Hook Island in the Whitsunday group on the Barrier Reef. Le Serrac told reporters he had swum in the shallow water alongside the monster, and had filmed it with a 16-mm movie camera.

At the time of the incident, Le Serrac was half-way through a literally round-the-world trip with his wife and two young children. The Le Serracs left France on their yacht in 1960, and were eventually washed on the Barrier Reef in late 1964. They bought a launch and decided to spend three months on Hook Island with a friend from Sydney, Hank de Jong.

TOP:
The Massachusetts serpent of 1877 previously described by the committee of the American Society of New England and identified *Schistophis adamanteus*. An adult specimen was described, as in the usual fashion, but it turned out to be a deformed *Ctenophorus blacki* snake.

TOP LEFT:
The famous sea-serpent seen from HMS Dromedary in 1848. This is the drawing appeared by the author which appeared in *The Illustrated London News*.

LEFT:
The most popular choice of sea-serpent explanation many people try to account for serpent sightings is suggesting that a species of long-necked plesiosaur, like the three magnificently pictured here, may have survived until around the Cretaceous period 70 million years ago.



RIDDLE OF THE SEA SERPENT

Le Serre told the press that at 9am on December 13, the whale party was crossing Stornesøen Bay in the Faroe Islands to get fresh water. Half-way across, Madame Le Serre pointed out a huge object at the bottom of the bay. It looked something like a huge elongated tadpole, with a big head and a long narrow body.

Le Serre loaded their two 16 mm cameras with film while de Jong secured the branch in a slow circle around the mysterious creature. They saw that it had a big white mark like a wound on its body. They took film and still photos of it.

Le Serre said that after half an hour he and de Jong decided to look at the creature under water, and had made no move in that time. Le Serre dived first with a camera, and de Jong followed armed with a spear gun.

Le Serre started filming at close quarters, and then the creature suddenly opened its mouth in a threatening way and started to move. It lifted off the bottom and turned towards Le Serre and de Jong. Both men backed away and fled to the launch. Madame Le Serre told them that the creature had swum off through the reef to the open sea. They could not follow it because the launch's motor failed, and they did not see it again.

Le Serre's story is the latest account of a sea-serpent in Australian waters, and possibly the best. It seems a pity to dismiss it as a hoax. But a hoax it *wasn't*.

Investigation showed that Le Serre had left France hasty, having unpaid debts for his supplies. Before he left, he tried to talk more men into joining him on a voyage, hinting that it would be financially profitable for

them. "It's to do with the sea serpent," he told them.

Le Serre's film proved to be fuzzy and blurred, showing nothing that looked like a live 40-footer. When he returned to France in 1966, he was arrested for absconding his debts and sentenced to six months' jail.

The full story of Le Serre's hoax received wide press coverage in Europe. One effect of this, perhaps an unfortunate one, was to further discredit the case for a real serpent. And today most marine biologists believe that there is a case, quite a strong one, for the existence of some large unknown creature which has given rise to the legend.

In a way, sea serpents are a lot like flying saucers. A considerable number of sightings are reported for each. The great part of these may be explained away by some kind of

natural cause. A number are undoubtedly hoaxes. But in each case of hoaxed cases or lack of sightings which appear to be genuine and which cannot be explained away. You either believe them or you deliberately close off your mind.

There are two types of sea serpent report — reports of living monsters, and reports of alleged carcasses cast up ashore. There have been several reports of both kinds in Australian waters at this country.

The two most recent, apart from La Serpent, were both carcasses. Both of them were explored. A mysterious 20-foot lump of hairy decaying flesh found on a Tasmania beach 10 years ago subsequently proved to be part of a dead whale. A

frightener off Mackay.

Possibly the most trustworthy account of a sea-serpent in Australian waters is one in a letter written by a French sea-captain in 1823. He was Jean Jallard, of the steamer *Saint-François-Xavier*, on the Tongking-New California-Australia run. His account was contained in a private letter to one of his superiors. It could not well be a hoax, since it was not made public until 1927.

Jallard reported that the ship was passing the heads at Port Stephens on passage from Noumea to Newcastle at about 6:30pm on February 2 1823, when two large objects like turtles' shells were seen about 30 feet off the starboard bow.

"Aboard of the engine," wrote

Following the spread of rumors in the port that she had met a sea-serpent 100 feet long on passage in the South Atlantic, the Lordships of the Admiralty asked her captain to supply either a sketch or a detailed report.

Captain Peter McQuade sent them a report: "I have the honor to acquaint you . . . that at 5 pm on the 6th of August last, in lat 24° 44' S. and long 50° 22' E. . . something very unusual was seen by Mr. Sartorius midshipman, rapidly approaching the ship from before the beam.

"On our attention being called to the object it was discovered to be an enormous serpent, with head and shoulder kept about four feet above the surface of the water. As nearly as we could approximate by comparing it with the length of what our main-topmast yard would show in the water, there was at the very least 60 feet of the animal's back, no part of which was, to our perception, used in propelling it through the water, either by vertical or horizontal undulations.

"It passed rapidly, but so close under our lee quarter that, had it been a man of my acquaintance, I should easily have recognized his features with the naked eye. It did not . . . deviate in the slightest degree from its course to the SW, which it held at the pace of from 12 to 15 miles per hour."

"The diameter of the serpent was about 15 or 16 inches behind the head, which was, without doubt, that of a snake, its color a dark brown, with yellowish white about the throat. It had no fins, but something like a mane of a horse, or rather a bunch of seaweed, waving about its back."

"I am having a drawing of the serpent made from a sketch taken immediately after it was gone, which I hope to have ready for transmission to my Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty by tomorrow's post."

The letter by Captain McQuade was published in *The Times* on October 13, and pictures of the monster taken from sketches by the witness and approved by him appeared in the *Illustrated London News* a fortnight later.

Research disclosed that this was not the first time British naval officers had sighted sea-monsters. There had been previous instances in 1820, 1836, 1829 and 1833.

Captain McQuade's letter suggested the inevitable crop of new hoaxes, while naturalists and scientists tried to find a "logical" explanation for what he described.

(Continued on page 81)

Settlers and bushfires

MANY HIGHLY COLORED tales are told of the dangerousights the early settlers had with bushfires. But actually, the oldtimers ready "baited fire."

This was an almost recognizable task in early, timbered hills in particular, because fire as thick leaf mould would not be extinguished. It just went on unceasingly and burnt one flame behind the fire-place, even in the middle of the night.

The settlers often awoke to the trouble of leaving all country long before the dangerous time. When the grass was too green they cut protective firebreaks, often mowing strip for miles with a scythe.

An idea of a bushfire approached the whole family went out and "burned back" in the cool of the evening, re-check the blaze with a hand cart strip.

The burning off of all the grass did not necessarily mean tragedy. The stock usually managed to abort or sprout new grass tufts or persistent palms in the golden sun-dew.

In fact, the area was due about the time most fires came and when fall to give green feed within a few days.

long, narrow creature found at Booth in 1854 was an oarfish, a ribbon-like deep-sea fish growing to about 20 feet which is sometimes cast up dying after a storm.

A live sea-serpent was reported in 1962 at Booby Island, in the north of Queensland. A beachcomber said he had seen a monster "like something out of a nightmare" — two miles offshore, and had watched it for about four minutes through field-glasses. It was whitish-grey in color, about 12 feet long, and seemed to have a man's neck, a whale's body and a frightened tail and fins. The director of the Queensland Museum suggested that it was a basking shark, although according to the description it looked nothing like one.

Another monster was reported by a number of people near Townsville in 1934. It was nearly 100 feet long, with three humps covered with barnacles and a head like a huge turtle's. It was seen by parties of fishermen, and also by the crew of a

Captain Jallard, "there was a big head like a camel's, on a long flexible neck having a great similarity to a swan's. The body, as thick as a big barrel, formed a chain of five humps. On the fourth hump was a large fin like a shark's, five feet high. The fin seemed to be black in color. The color of the animal was dirty yellow, the skin smooth without the appearance of scales."

Jallard said the monster was seen by the ship's officers, Polynesian crew and Chinese sailors. "The animal was visible for 15 minutes," he wrote. "No optical illusion is possible."

The most famous sea-serpent sighting of all was reported more than a century ago by a number of thoroughly reliable witnesses. The monster — a long, snake-like one this time — crossed the path of a British ship on the high seas.

The steam-sloop HMS *Dundas*, 19 guns, arrived at Plymouth from the East Indies on October 4, 1848.





THE BLIND MAN AND THE BLACKMAILER

The blind man was able to identify the corpse by touch as the man he'd met in the boarding-house. But according to the doctor, the fellow had died half an hour before then . . .

FICTION / PETER SINCLAIR

DINNER finished, Detective Constable Donald Burke pealed back his chair. "Last night Inspector O'Hare and I made police history," he announced. "We had a body identified by a blind man. Rather unique, wouldn't you say?"

"Under no circumstances would I say anything was 'rather unique,'" his father-in-law, Edgar Hodgkins, answered. "You might as well say a girl is almost a virgin or that she's slightly pregnant."

"God," Donald croaked, appealing to his wife, Bessie, who was at the table. "What d'you do with the hair-splitting old goat?"

"Come on, Dad," said Bessie, "you know what Donald means! After all, it is rather unusual for a blind man to identify a body."

Hodgkins nodded. "Rather unusual — yes. Rather unique — even."

Bessie gave up. Apparently her father was in one of his difficult moods.

"Tell me about it, Donald," she said. "It sounds interesting."

Donald lit a cigarette and began. "Well, about nine o'clock last night Inspector O'Hare rang the station from a boarding house in Raglan Street, Missouri, where the body was found. The landlord had reported it over the police emergency number, and the radio room sent the message straight out to the Inspector's car.

"I went straight over there. Big

old house on a corner, two stories, like a rabbit warren inside and all sorts of odds and ends strung in and out. The body was sitting up large as life in an easy chair in one of the bedrooms on the ground floor, off the hall.

"Apparently the dead man had moved in only the previous night. Mr Solomons, the landlord, who found the body, said he'd never seen him before. A girl had rented the room a few days earlier, paid Mr Solomons the first week's rent and taken the key. No one in the house had ever clapped eyes on the dead man and only this blind chap had so much as spoken to him."

"Did the blind man live at the boarding house?" Bessie asked.

"Yes. In the next room."

"On which side — nearer the front door or further along the hall?" Hodgkins asked, eyes closed, head back, hand pointed to the ceiling.

"Oh, so you've come down to earth, have you?" said Donald. "The blind man, whose name is Phillip James, lives in the room next up the hall. He'd been out for a walk — he has one of those long, white sticks, you know the kind — and on the way back he decided to call on the new boarder just to be sociable. James knew the man was in his room because he'd heard him moving about on the way out for his walk. He knocked on the door, which was open a little, and called out 'Are you

there, Mr Tyler?'"

"How did he know the man's name?" Hodgkins asked.

"At breakfast yesterday morning Mr Solomons told the other boarders about Mr Tyler's arrival, although Tyler himself didn't surface. Anyway, Tyler called out to come in. So James went in, introduced himself and went into a rather self-conscious explanation about being blind. Tyler seemed to be anxious for not getting up and said he hadn't been looking well."

"James headed in the direction the voice was coming from and stumbled unexpectedly into Tyler's feet and knees. Tyler was sitting in an armchair in the middle of the room. After apologizing for being so clumsy, James asked if he might just run his fingers lightly over Tyler's face since he tried to have some idea of the appearance of any person he was talking to."

"Tyler took his hand and placed it on his cheek. James says he felt Tyler flinch slightly as his hand made contact, as if he formed the epithet *disrespectful*. So, not feeling particularly welcome, James made some excuse about wanting to listen to the radio and asked what time it was. He says Tyler told him it was 8:35, but it must have been a bit earlier than that because the doctor examined the body at 10 o'clock and Tyler had been dead already for at least two hours — strangled."

"Anyhow, later on, after the landlord discovered the body - he saw the door open and peeped in - we couldn't find anyone except James who could positively identify Tyler. James told us he had felt Tyler's pulse and if we would take him to the body he could tell whether or not it was him. Those blind chaps must have a fantastic sense of touch."

"But not such a good sense of time or distance, eh?" said Hodgkins.

"Apparently not."

"What else could Mr James tell you about Tyler?"

Donald shook his head. "Nothing very helpful. After all, they'd had only one very short conversation. He did mention that Tyler spoke with an American accent, although I don't see yet where that's going to get us. It means either he's an American or someone who's lived there long enough to pick up an accent, or it could have been put on."

"Why should Tyler have put on an accent?"

"So James wouldn't be able to identify him later. It must have been obvious to Tyler that James was blind, so if he changed his voice there would be no way James could identify him. You see, Tyler was in the blackmail business and the girl who rented the room was his partner. We found a heavy metal box in a false bottom of a suitcase under the bed in his room. Inside the strong



"The chef sends his compliments, Sir."

box were three negatives and several prints from each. I need hardly say what they were pictures of."

"Were they those sort of pictures?" Ennis asked,aghast.

"Food so..."

"And did you recognize any of the... ah, subjects?" Hodgkins asked.

"It was the same girl in each picture - the one who rented the room for Tyler. Solomons recognized her when we showed him one. We haven't cracked down any of the

theses cases in the pictures yet, but we will. There are one or two questions I'd like to ask them."

Ennis put her rubber washing-up gloves under the sink. "You think one of them killed him?"

"They're the only ones with a motive that we know of so far, so they're at the top of my list."

"What about the girl?" Hodgkins asked. "Are you looking for her?"

"Oh, she'll turn up. Right now we're more interested in the men."

"You seem to be working on the assumption that whoever killed Tyler didn't have access to the strongbox."

"Well, it was still locked when we found it. The key was pushed under the carpet and Tyler's prints were the only ones on the key and the box."

"And these circumstances, you think, are sufficient grounds for assuming the killer is one of the men in the photos?"

"They're good enough grounds for me," said Donald. "You're in an argumentative mood tonight, aren't you?"

"Perhaps less tolerant than usual," Hodgkins conceded.

"Tolerant? What's being tolerant got to do with it?"

"All right, Dad, that's enough," said Ennis, stroking a blow-up. "I'm sure Donald's telling you all this only because he thinks you might be interested."

"I am interested."

"You're only interested in arguing," Donald cut in hotly.

"Nothing of the sort. I'm interested in seeing that you don't make a fool of yourself by..."

Donald exploded. "Oh, shut up. I'm sick and tired of..." The telephone rang and Donald broke off to answer it.



"Are we still in first class, Alfred?"

"I'll be right over," he said quickly. He stood up and turned to Jane. "That was the Inspector. They've found the girl."

"Dead, I assume," Hodgkin said quietly.

Donald opened his mouth to reply, thought better of it, and left, slamming the door behind him.

"She's dead all right," said Hodgkin. "I was afraid of that. It looks like Donald's off on the wrong track again."

"How can you be so sure, Dad?"
Hodgkin snorted bleakly. "Time will tell, unfortunately."

Jane and Hodgkin were drawing in front of the television when Donald came home late that night.

Jane yawned and stretched her legs. "Have you eaten, dear?"

"Not hungry," Donald grunted and threw himself down on the lounge. He looked thoughtfully across the room at his father-in-law, who appeared to be asleep in the armchair. "You knew she'd turn up dead, didn't you?"

Hodgkin didn't open his eyes. "It seemed probable."

"Why?"

"Various reasons."

"Tell me."

Hodgkin yawned and sat up. "Let's not get our priorities mixed. You still haven't caught the murderer. That's the first task. The explanations can wait until later. Now, tell me about the girl... where did you find her?"

"She'd fallen from a balcony in a block of seven units at Crescendo — or that's what it looks like. Just before nine o'clock tonight a man who lives in one of the units went out to put his car away. He saw it took him only two minutes to drive up the ramp from the street and into his parking bay under the building. Then he saw the girl's body lying on the ground. He's positive it wasn't



"So then say I'm rashed up as a surgeon, hush? Well, by Jove, I'll show them!"

there when he went out to the car, because he would have had to walk right over it. So that fixes the time of death pretty definitely about nine o'clock. The boys from forensics are sure that she fell where she found her. There's no question of someone having moved the body after she landed."

"I suppose you've talked to everyone who lives in the units?"

"At the moment we're concentrating on the units with balconies over where the body was found. The building has seven floors and four of the seven units we're interested in are vacant. There's no sign of a forced entry. Even if somebody'd fit themselves in with a key we'd know about it."

"What about the other three units?"

"The other three are units 15, 21 and 27. Unit 15 is owned by a retired

art teacher — an old gal of about 70. She was at home all evening and had been watching television from six o'clock until we called at her unit about 9.45. She saw nothing and she heard nothing."

"Is her hearing good?"

"It seemed all right. We didn't have to shout at her to make ourselves heard."

"Where was the television set in relation to the balcony?"

"She had curtains pulled over the door leading from the living room to the balcony and the television set was in front of the curtains. Nobody could have used that balcony tonight without her knowing."

"I see. Now, what about the other two units?"

"A young couple lives in 21 and they were at a party in unit 17. That's on the opposite side of the building from the courtyard. When the Inspector and I called they'd both been there ever since the party started. That was about eight o'clock."

"I suppose they had plenty of willowits?"

"A whole poundful. Of course we'll check their story to make sure neither of them slipped away from the party. The Inspector and I had a look over their unit and there's no sign that anyone'd forced entry and they both say that nothing seems to have been stolen or disturbed. Just the same I suppose they are possibilities."

Hodgkin grunted sceptically.
"What about 27?"

"The occupant of 27 is a Mr

ADAM, March, 1973 27

Australia's earliest shipwreck

THE FIRST EUROPEAN SHIP known to have visited Australia was the Dutch merchantman *Duyfken*, commanded by Willem Jansz, who made the western coast of the Cape York peninsula in 1606.

But at least one European crew may have sighted Australia half a century or more earlier — and failed to return to report their discovery.

In 1543, the remains of an ancient ship were found on the coast of Victoria near the western end of Bass Strait. The ship appeared to have been a high-sided galleon, probably of Portuguese or Dutch origin.

The wreck was called the "Mahogany Ship", after the hard-wearing timber of which it was built. Its condition suggested that it had been slowly decaying there for more than a century.

Experts believe that the "Mahogany Ship" may have run aground there some time in the 16th Century, years before the *Duyfken's* voyage — making its doomed, forgotten crew the first Europeans to see Australia.

Pigget — an American. He's something to do with the American Consul."

Hodgkins' eyebrows rose a fraction.

"I know what you're thinking, just because Tyler had an American accent there might be some connection between them."

"That wasn't quite what I had in mind — but go on."

"Pigget says he was playing cards all evening with a friend who lives in unit 29."

"Just the two of them?"

"Yes."

"And what time did the card game begin?"

"About six o'clock — so they say."

"The fellow he was playing cards with . . . is he an American, too?"

"Yes. They both work at the American Consulate."

Hodgkins nodded his head thoughtfully.

Donald continued. "Of course it's possible that someone took the girl up on to the roof and threw her down from there — the door from the fire-escape to the roof was never locked."

Hodgkins looked unconcerned. "They'd have to spin her a pretty good sort of story to get her up there, especially if she'd been mixed up in the blackmail business. She'd be pretty much on her guard, particularly if she knew someone had murdered her partner."

"But she might never have known Tyler was dead. After all, he was killed only the previous evening and she might not have had daily contact with him. It didn't make the papers and it was only on one radio broadcast that I knew of."

Hodgkins stretched his legs. "There's one way this whole matter could be cleared up very quickly."



"It's one of two things — either the great god of the four winds, Thimbala, is angry with our last virgin sacrifice, or the enormous pressure of formation of molten rock is breaking through a weak spot in the earth's crust."

"Oh? And how's that?"

"Take Mr. James with you to the block of units and introduce him to Mr. Pigget and his friend."

Donald boggled. "But just because Pigget and the other bloks have American accents . . ."

Hodgkins cut in. "Donald, I've made a suggestion. I can't compel you to act upon it. You must please yourself!"

Donald stepped his boots down.

on the arms of the sofa. "OK," he said, and reached for the phone.

Fifteen minutes later, as Hodgkins reached to put out the lamp beside his bed, a car horn sounded in front of the house. He glanced at the alarm clock. It was 11 pm. He heard Donald leave, closing the front door quietly behind him.

In the darkness Hodgkins worked to himself

* * *

At 5 am the doorbell rang. Hodgkins pulled on his dressing gown as he shuffled down the hall to open the door. On the threshold stood Donald, Inspector O'Hare and a tall man wearing dark glasses and carrying a long, white stick.

Inspector O'Hare, a short, stocky man with bull-dog face, seized Hodgkins' hand in a powerful grip and wrung it vigorously. "Good to see you again, Mr. Hodgkins. Been keeping well?"

"Sorry I had to wake you, Dad," said Donald, "but I forgot my key. That's a Mr. James."

"Good morning, Inspector — good morning, Mr. James. I judge from the looks on your faces that your efforts haven't been in vain."

Donald nodded. "Things turned

Soil turned wood to stone

When an old Negro was being pulled down near Coomo some years ago, the overseer found that all the wood of the poles which lay below ground had been turned to stone.

Apparently there is a very unusual quality in the soil in the locality which has the strange effect on wood. P.M.C. Americans have discovered that some telegraph poles around Coomo have been similarly affected, and so have some old railroads on the road between Coomo and Goolburn.

An old slave near Coomo was buried about three months back so that the remains could be moved to another cemetery, and it was found that the coffin had partly turned to stone.

Around the same time, the bodies of some British soldiers who had died in colonial times were exhumed from the old Goolburn cemetery to be sent to England for reburial. The bodies were found to be in an excellent state of preservation, although they had been buried for more than 90 years.

out pretty well — but not so well for Mr Pugot."

"Or Mr Pugot's friend," the Inspector added.

"So he was in it too, was he?"

said Hodgson, leading the way inside.

"Up to his eyeballs," said Donald.

"He was being blackmailed too."

Ema came in from the hall, wrapped her dressing-gown about her. "Goodness! Do you know it's only five o'clock? Good morning, Inspector. We haven't seen you for months. Where have you all been at this hour?"

"We just put a pair of murderers behind bars," said the Inspector with satisfaction. "Now, Mr Hodgson, I thank you over again for explanation."

"Hasn't they confessed?" Hodgson asked.

"Not yet, but we've got them cold. After Mr Jones recognised Pugot's voice we searched both their units and found these." The Inspector drew from inside his jacket pocket a plain, brown-paper envelope and tossed it onto the coffee-table.

Hodgson opened the envelope and drew out a number of photographs and two negatives. There were two different photos, three prints of each, showing two men in advanced stages of undress engaged in fore-making with a young woman, sensually undressed.

"We found two strands of nylon from the girl's party-hose caught on the rough central top of the wall



"How do you spell 'romantic'?"

surrounding the balcony of Pugot's unit," the Inspector said. "It must have caught them when they tipped her over. Now, Mr Hodgson, why were you so sure that one of the Americans had been involved in Tyler's murder and why did you think the girl would be killed?"

Hodgson scratched his beard thoughtfully. "I wasn't certain, you know I only thought it probable. There were certain aspects of Donald's description of Mr James' encounter with Tyler that interested

me. First of all, there was the incident where Mr James stumbled against Tyler's knees as he sat in the corridor. It struck me as odd that a blind man who presumably has had considerable experience gauging a person's distance from his voice should be so clumsy."

Mr James agreed. "It's certainly not like me to do a thing like that. Usually I can judge a man's distance to the inch."

Hodgson continued. "Then there was the time discrepancy. Mr James said he left Tyler's room after 8.30, but the police doctor said Tyler was dead at eight. Are you quite sure you didn't make a mistake, Mr James?"

"Quite sure," James said emphatically, "because as soon as I returned to my room I turned on the radio for the concert hour. The program began at 8.30 and it had already started."

"Thank you, Mr James," said Hodgson. "Where you went wrong, Donald, as I pointed out at the time, was in assuming that the murderer must be one of the men in the pictures inside the strong-box. I grant you that the box was found locked in its hiding place and the key was under the carpet, and both of them carried the fingerprints only of the dead man. But your assumption that the killer hadn't opened the strong box restricted the range of suspects to only those people — the three men in the photos."

"Now, bearing in mind that Tyler had moved there only the previous day, and that he'd taken some pains to remain anonymous, it was unlikely that anyone could call on him unless he wanted them to."

(Continued on page 76)

"I still say you're spoiling him too much with those before-dinner drinks."



VENGEANCE VIGIL

Someone had spread the word around that Mal Archer was coming to Lariat, and he saw that the same trap that had finished Jeff McLeod was being prepared for him.

FICTION / PETER NORCROSS

AS MAL ARCHER jingled across the porch of the Lariat post office, he realized he was being closely scrutinized by a slit-eyed gent with a mustached ear, who sat hunched in a tilted chair on the veranda of the adjoining building which housed the Brumtree Bar. But Archer gave no sign of having noticed and strode on into the post office.

At the sound of his jingling spurs crossing the floor, a girl came to the window marked "General Delivery." The big rider swept his shapeless sombrero from his tousled brown head and took the girl in with frank admiration in his eyes. She had high-piled coppery hair, full red lips with tiny dimples at the corners, soft hazel eyes as clear as a pool beneath a willow, but shadowed, Mal thought, by a vague uneasiness.

He could see she was sizing him up for exactly what he appeared to be — six-foot-two of leathery cowboy, dusty and trail-worn. A lazy smile softened the hardness of his steely-gray eyes, broke the rugged lines of his bearded face, exposed gleaming white teeth in a wide good-humored mouth.

A warm flush spreading upward from the girl's neck relieved the pallor of her small face. Her face too revealed something more than casual interest. She tilted long silky lashes quizzically.

"Mal Archer is the name," the lanky stranger said.

If he had said "Dallas Isacett" the girl's expression couldn't have altered more quickly. There was a tightening around her lips and eyes. Her oval face paled again. When she sorted through a bundle of letters and handed one out, Archer caught the trembling of her hand. Then he

caught something else — an opening and closing of both eyes while her gaze was not on him, but past his shoulder. He whirled.

Barely did he catch a glimmer of a face at the street window — the slit-eyed face of the man with the mustached ear. He whirled back. The friendliness was gone now from his gray eyes.

"Why did you signal to that gun-slingin' who I am?" he asked flatly.

The girl's humped eyes were panicky. Her face flushed and paled. Then her little pointed chin came up. But when she spoke, her red lips quivered.

"Besides being impudent," she said firmly, "you must be loco!"

She reached up above the window and released a catch. A wooden blind dropped in front of Mal's nose with a bang. He stood there for a minute listening to the girl's footsteps fading at the rear, then with a twisted grin on his haggard face he crepted to the door with his snowy right hand hovering over the scoured gun-ball on his right thigh.

The slit-eyed man had vanished. Mal knew there was no use searching for him — not now. He swung along the street and shouldered into a Chinese cafe.

Supper time had passed. The cafe was deserted. Mal went back and sat down in a corner, facing the door. While he waited, he read his letter.

Don't take a chance on coming across to the Lariat G. 12 miles due west of town. Ride south four miles. Swing west into Big Coulee and follow it 'till you pass the mouth of crazy Man Creek and hit two big spurs meeting with a shoulder between. That comes four miles due north to the spread

Keep your powder dry,

MOSS GOODWRIGHT

A fat Chinaman with a face like a full moon set down a bowl of soup and padded back to the kitchen. Mal read the letter through carefully a second time, then tore it and the envelope into small squares and threw them into the steaming soap. The Chinaman brought the rest of his supper. While he ate, he thought, wondering too if he would ever finish that meal.

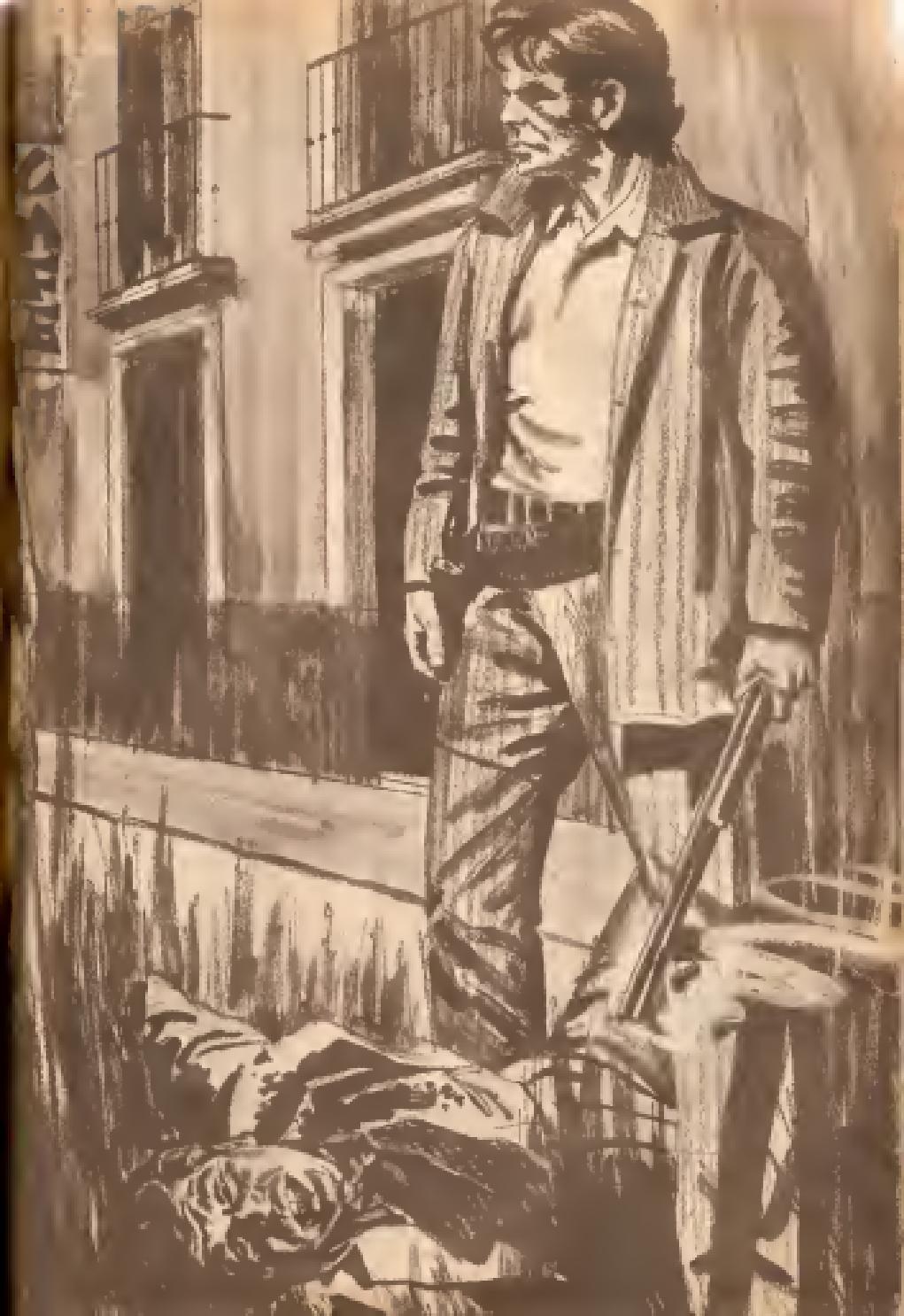
Mal Archer was a top-hand with the New Mexico Cattlemen's Association. For reasons he never talked about, he hated all outlaws worse than scorpions on his skin tail.

A week ago a telegram had come to headquarters in Santa Fe from Moss Goodwright urgently requesting a man. The entire Lariat Basin was being rapidly stripped of cattle by a band of thieves nobody could uncover. A secret meeting of the cattlemen had been held and the action decided upon.

Goodwright went on to say that Jeff McLeod, town marshal, had been kidnapped by the rustlers — shot in the back. That's what made Necroso ask for the best friend Mal ever had. When Mal thought of Little Jeff, as loyal a medicosic as ever a man rode the river with cold rage chilled his heart.

Mal Archer was detailed. Moss Goodwright was telegraphed to that effect and instructed to have a letter containing details waiting in the post office.

"And here I am," mused Archer. "But instead of being under cover, I'm most likely bound in right now by a ring of gunblits. Somebody ran a whisker on me through that Vision of Delight in the post office. And



where does she live in?" He shook his massive head mournfully. "And she seemed so sweet!" Then he got an idea.

Once whoever was behind all this had learned that a man had been sent for, that the man coming was "Mal Archer," and that a letter would be waiting for him, it was only necessary to post a lookout at the post office to watch strangers calling for mail, and get a signal from the girl when the right one blew in. And that information could have been received from but one source — a tip-off on the telegraph.

Big Mal Archer banged a silver dollar on the table and slid it to his feet. The Chinese was lighting his lamps. Mal was surprised to see that night had fallen. He stepped out into the darkness, then slid sideways. Out of the corner of his eye he caught the glint of lamplight on a gun barrel in the black shadow beside the gnarled trunk of a cottonwood tree.

In such a light, Mal Archer acted first and thought afterward. The spurt of flame from the tree trunk was a shade behind matching his own. He threw himself sideways. A dog snarled past his cheek. When no second shot came, he darted for the tree.

A man lay huddled in the dust. Archer rolled him over and allowed him seconds to get his face in the light. It was the gunlock with the mutilated ear. He had another mutilation now — a gaping hole through his neck.

Men came ploughing from downways all along the dusty little street. Remembering what he was here for, Archer knew he must make a quick getaway. But the dying dry-gletcher was writhing. Mal dropped on one knee and put an air down to his lips.

"He was chain lightning," Clegg



"I suppose if you had your way, you'd get a divorce and artificial turf."

"Hey!" snarled the grizzly. Then he died.

Booted feet were thudding on the plank walk. Men were yelling hoarsely. Mal leaped into the narrow opening between the cage and the sizes next door, and from there faded into the blackness of an alley. There was no telling if his getaway had been seen.

"Crowley! Crowley!" he kept muttering, then recalled where he

had seen that name. It was in black letter on a galvanized sign he had noticed when he rode into town — Crowley's LimeStone Bar.

"That don't make sense," he thought as he ran. "There isn't no law in Lassit since Little Jeff was buck-shot, and most likely Crowley wants it should stay that way. But if Crowley is the now behind all this, he knows I ain't no bremen come to clean up his town. But—" he croaked over an air can, hopped to his feet and ran on—"if Crowley is the boss rudder in these parts, that would make sense."

The dopey little telegraph agent was dozing at his desk when something woke him up with a snap — Archer's gun cracked in the ribs.

"The name is Mal Archer," the big fellow said drowsily. "Before I draw a circle of holes around your belly button, I want to know who tipped you off I was coming."

"I didn't tell nobody!" quavered the cowering agent.

"It ain't good for your soul to lie," advised Archer "not just before going to hell anyhow. I know you told somebody. My question is who? Quick!"

The terrified agent dropped on his knees beside his desk and stuck both



hands on the air. "If you promise not to kill me," he blubbered, "I'll talk."

"She's a deal," grunted Mal Archer. "Talk!"

"I stole \$40 one time," blubbered the agent, "and I got found out. From then on I've had to show every vice, or go to the pen, master. I'm a sick man, I'll die!"

"Who do you show the vice to?" demanded Mal.

"Tom Padway," pleaded the agent. "It was from his bank I stole the \$40."

The tall horse to cattle thrower off the agent growling on the floor and strode through the darkness to the feed stable where he had left his horse. He was settling his big Rovers saddle on Shambur-hoof's strong back when the little shikeman came writhing out of a stall leading a mare that made Archer stop dead.

"I don't wonder, cowboy," chuckled the shikeman. "The hen's the finest piece of palatable horse-flesh in the Bass. She's queen, and she rules by a queen."

"I have found comfortable knees in this hell-hole," said Archer, "but surely a queen."

"You would," affirmed the ironman, "if you looked in the post office. Miss Mary Randall, she owns the mare." He grabbed a comb and brush. "Miss Mary will be in right soon. Worker' daytime, she mostly does her riding at night."

Mal rode out the back door of the stable and out of town by back ways, then struck south as he had been told by Goodnight. His thoughts were troubled. Too many folks were getting bogged in this pit. He better learn what Miss Goodnight had to say.

Tom Padway might or might not be hooked up with Crowley. Padway got copies of all telegrams. Mal suddenly remembered that he had



"Call off the offensive — Goliath is stoned again!"

been grossly careless in one respect — he had failed to see if this letter had been steamed open.

Mary Randall might be the whole show. The girl with the blue eye might have been a henchwoman of him, not Crowley's. The words he mumbled while dying could have been in delirium. The telegraph agent could do by her said a word. Mal realised he hadn't a shred of evidence that wouldn't need the testimony of a dead man.

When he judged he was nearing Big Coulee he looked back. Perhaps half a mile behind him, silhouetted for moment on a ridge, a lone rider appeared, then dipped again into darkness. The big rider beat a hasty Shambur-hoof with the spurs.

When he reached the mouth of the coulee, he swung the big gelding in and quickly caught him in a clamp of red-shank. Then he went back to the mouth of the wash and hid in a

rock pile, listening subconsciously to the sad night breeze whispering through the chaparral. At the sound of hoofbeats, he gun slid into his hand.

The lone rider whacked into the coulee mouth and passed within 15 feet of Archer's hiding place at a long lope. When Mal saw who it was, he felt a prickly sensation at the roots of his hair. It was a girl in a side-saddle, mounted on a tall palomino. It was too dark to see the girl's face. But the Big Association men didn't need to be told who she was.

Quickly getting Shambur-hoof, Mal let the fast galloping stretch out till he detected a faint blur in the darkness ahead, then drew in some.

His first thought was to overtake the girl and demand a showdown. Then it struck him that the girl hadn't hesitated at the coulee mouth. She couldn't possibly have seen his tracks. If she was trailing him, it must be because she knew he would go that way. And if she knew that, his letter had been opened.

A new thought came to him. What if old Miss Goodnight herself were in on the drift! He had known such cases — where a renegade masked his identity by posing as the leader of honest men. Then Archer got another surprise.

After another mile, the dark bar ahead suddenly vanished. Mal went ahead cautiously. At the mouth of a shallow draw that bore upward to the southwest, the ring of hoofprints on rock stopped him. Far up in that draw he heard the bawling chitter. Mary Randall wasn't on his trail at all. She had gone away on some mysterious trail of her own.

Again, Mal's first notion was to

Australia's fine kelpie sheepdogs

WELL-TRAINED, HARD-WORKING sheepdogs have always been important to the Australian wool industry, and in the last century dogmen down under won a lot of international dog trials for the work.

The world's first sheepdog trials were held at Forbes, NSW, in 1871. The winner at Forbes was a crossbred bitch named Kelpie, one of the founders of Australia's famous kelpie breed.

The name kelpie is believed to have come originally from one of the Forbes winner's ancestors, a fox colie bitch named Kelp. This dog was imported from Scotland by John King, of Hanging Rock Station, Boggab, as long ago as 1825.

The kelpie breed was valuable to sheep farmers because the dogs were very intelligent and could be thoroughly trained in their work. Two brothers named Kelpie and another dog-breeder named Macleod dominated the Australian sheepdog trials for more than 20 years following 1890.

At trials and shows, these breeders used to demonstrate the excellent working qualities of their kelpies by "tearing the chicken". The dogs were trained to control a live chicken and drag it into a pen or

and her. But he decided against it. In the first place, he'd probably lose her in the darkness. And he was becoming more and more anxious to make talk with Moss Goodnight. With the murmur of Little Jeff McLoud graving at his heart, he pointed Slumberhook west through the corral.

The rising moon was filling the big yard on the Loring C with pale white light when he rode in. He spotted a light in a kitchen window, then quieted off a pack of snapping hounds. A long-bearded oldster threw the door wide and came hobbling toward him.

"You Moss Goodnight?" asked Archer.

"Grizzly," snapped old Goodnight, "who told you Mocho was shot by Mal Archey?"

The guest's feet twisted in the gravel. "I dismember, boss," he said sourly. "Rock I heard it in the Rummus Bar."

"Light down, young feller," invited old Moss. "We can talk more comfortable inside. Grizzly will look to your soreness."

As the weary roarer turned to lead the horse away, Mal caught the evil light in his reddish eyes.

While Moss Goodnight stomped around rustling up some hot coffee, Archer stood him up in the lamplight, but couldn't make much of him. He

Archey creased his steely eyes on the oldster's bearded face. "I told but one person — that was when I asked for my mail."

The old man's white eyelids fluttered. "That's out," he growled. "Miss Mary, she is of the soil of the earth. She come West three-four years back to try and get her bad brother off the books. Beer since then she has not only shirked for herself but for that weak-kneed brother of hers too. Mary, she is about loco over that whiskey-guzzler pup, hoping eternally to salvage him from the devil."

"The devil," hissed Archer, "being Crowley?"

"Noge," contradicted the oldster. "Duke Crowley won't tell Laury a deep. But let's get down to cases." He shoved his cap aside and stuffed a load of cut-plug into a charcoal cigarette.

"This whole Larat Basin is being combed clean of prime cattle by some crew of long-riders we can't even put a finger on," he resumed. "We've had several brawls with the damn wolves, killed two-three vinegarroos nobody recognized — but who the hell knows, we don't know."

"It wouldn't be Duke Crowley," mused Archer laconically. "For Tom Falvey, would it?"

Old Moss Goodnight bughed till the tears ran down into his whiskers. "Hill's hoptoads!" he spat. "That lard-harel of a Crowley would skin you out of your eye teeth in a minute, man, but Duke's got his hands full acting as self-appointed Mayor of Larat. As for Falvey Tom's man's a nose-eyed scorpion and crookender's the hook of a cow, but there ain't enough of him to be a shooter. Besides which, young feller, did I overlook telling you the raiment of this pack of wolves is a woman?" And at Mal's expression of disbelief he added, "A sic woman ridin' a side-saddle!"

Big Mal Archer had heard of such a thing. But, if true in the case, it was the first time he had encountered it. His thoughts flew to Mary Randall as he had first seen her — coppery hair, smiling lips, and soft hazel eyes. Then he saw her as he had seen her last — flying off to the northwest on a racing palomino, and mounted on a side-saddle.

"Got any ideas?" he asked, "where these hooters hide out?"

"Not any," grumbled old Moss. "There's been a crew of birds with price tags on their hair up in Bullocky Meadows for several years, but them fellers ain't never bothered us down here in the Basin."

(Continued on page 77)

Great cattle drives of the overlanders

GREAT OVERLAND CATTLE DRIVES are as much a part of Australia's tradition and history as they are of America's. Australian cattlemen have to cope with conditions — heat, dust, drought and distance — which are the most difficult in the world.

The first "overlanders" in Australia were John Gardner, Joseph Howdon, John Chapman and George Hindebotham. These partners took a herd of cattle from the Murray River to the Port Phillip district in 1837.

The first mob of cattle to be overlanded from Queensland to the Kimberleys in northwestern Australia made the journey in 1884. The lone overlander was Nathaniel Bachman, a partner in the forming of the first cattle station west of the overland telegraph. His wife was the first white woman to travel to the west of the Pink Downs.

Australia's longest stock route is the Canning route, running 870 miles from Halfpenny Creek to Wyndham in Western Australia. Nowadays it is almost unused.

"All except one leg," grumbled the old man, "it's second-growth lack'ry, damn it! You're the young whipper-snapper the Association sent, eh?"

"You know a heap of things, words?" inquired Mal tartly.

"I tell you easy does it," grumbled old Goodnight, "and Grizzly Foothock, my segundo, slopes in from Larat and tells me you started right in to work the town over by killing Mocho Spear, one of my own cow!"

Mal's mind was working like a typewriter. "Who sold your segundo," he asked curiously, "that the guy who shot Spear was me?"

"Hanged if I know," growled the oldster irritably. He stuck two fingers through his whiskers and gave a shrill whistle.

A lumbering giant of a man lunged from the doorway of a high bankhouse and came limbering across the gravel. Mal got a good look at his face in the moonlight — the darkly glowering face of a man born in an ill-fortune.

was a hawk-visaged old wolf of a man, bony and stooped, with sky batterikle eyes and a jaw that clanged like a door hinge.

"How come you, Archer," he snarped, glancing through the steam from his coffee, "to gun down one of my boyz?"

"I was coming out of the Chink's," Mal explained, "when this coyote you call 'Spear' threw down on me from behind a tree. I didn't mind."

"Hill's hoptoads!" swore old Moss. "One honore don't throw down on another for no reason whatever."

"That's puzzling me some, too," Mal admitted. "Has this stock you, Goodnight, if nobody knew I was in town, how come anybody to know Spear was gunned by me?"

Old Moss' faded blue eyes shined thoughtfully. "I reckon," "Mocho probably talked some before he cashed in. But if, like you say, you told nobody who you was, how would Mocho know?"

Cleopatra







Cleopatra

Leonie's cool and shadowed eyes and oriental hair give her a mystic look, a wise and secret, Sphinx-like air; as if she knows of certain things too far and deep to see, hidden by all the magic rings of Eastern secrecy.



Tank Breakout

The Allies had driven the Nazis out of Normandy. But they still had to crack the great shield of the German armored formations around the beach-head.

FACT / LEN GUTTRIDGE

"THREE TIGERS at the crossroads," snapped Lieutenant Chip Krebs of the US Second Armored Division. "Let's go get the bastards."

Commanding the leading Sherman, he had spotted the German Mark VI tanks through field glasses from his open hatch. Krebs pressed his A-2 tank switch again, repeated attack orders to the column of tanks following.

"Don't try to take any of 'em from the front," he warned. "Speak up and hit 'em on the flanks."

By German standards the Sherman tank was as good as obsolete, easily equalled by the Mark IV and in a straight fight at anything over point-blank range, no match at all for either the Mark V Panthers or Mark VI Tigers. But the close nature of the Normandy battlefield had noticed the Germans of some of the advantages of their powerful tank armament. Moreover, thanks to American mentality hedgerows were no longer impenetrable barriers.

"Okay, all tank commanders," barked Krebs. "Off the road."

The column split and moved left and right, tank drivers gunning for the hedgerows seven feet high and just as thick that bounded open meadows. Driving the lead tank with "Hitler's Heisse" painted on the bow, Corporal Stanley Waco swiveled, wincing his head would quit throbbing. The unbroken emphases always gave him a headache.

Again now though, Waco was more conscious of the fierce tension building in his guts. Same with the others. They were a crew of six personnel, an army average. Second Armored "Hell on Wheels" rookies with a couple of week's combat training at Fort Benning or Camp Polk but none of them had tasted real war so far.

Waco shifted his seat of chewing gum, throttled the engine to a roar and Hitler's Heisse leaped at the soft-looking hedgerows.

Eight steel teeth welded to the Sherman's front-end bit deep into the hedgerow roots. Soil and tangled underbrush split and loosened. Tank tracks grinding, the 33-ton Sherman bulldozed through the barrier. Then Hitler's Heisse was converging, along with the other four, on the herd of New Tigers clustered at the Tracyville crossroads.

Waco's co-driver, Private Todd Lamont, threaded the end of an armor bolt through the receiver of the bow machinegun, jerked back twice on the bolt to throw a shell into the chamber. Lamont squinted into the periscope. Dull grey mist blotted vision, then cleared to reveal bomb-shaped hedgehog pipes 50 yards ahead and glimpses of two stationary Tigers, one of them with gun barrel pointing to bring its huge 88 mm cannon to bear on the approaching Yanks.

"Listen, tank commanders," rasped Lieutenant Krebs's voice. "Don't stay long in one place. Keep moving. Don't let 'em draw a bead on you." Then Krebs was rattling off directions to his own crew.

Just below Krebs crouched his gunner, Corporal Joe Fern, sweating face pressed against the four rubber pad of his telescope eyepiece, fists closed tight on the twist-grips of the power-transmission, foot poised above the firing pedal. The telescope gave him a small concentrated field of vision. He couldn't sight the target and knew nothing about the songs used Krebs's urgent voice helped him in official fire-order sequence.

Waco's voice was restricted too. All he could do was reluctantly obey Krebs's harsh commands. "Yer left, driver, that's enough, straight now, slow down, left." Then quickly to Joe Fern: "Transne, right, steady, two rounds, FIRE!"

Down in the turret Fern kicked the pedal. The 75 roared, metal almost jerking Hitler's Heisse off its

tracks. A split second later Krebs swore, "Missa, goddamn!" He issued new commands. Corporal Fern re-adjusted the 75's elevation and windage and the trench clattered about as Milt Davis, his tracks, threw in another round.

Before Fern could fire again the Tiger's 88 flamed and Hitler's Heisse took shuddering concussion from a near miss.

"Fire!" bawled Krebs. Inside, the Sherman's gun barrel roared a full



From Normandy

12 inches, sprung back into position, shell case clattering off the chisel.

Kroese shouted "We hit the son of a bitch!"

The shell burst on the Tiger's side, flame spewed from a sudden gaping hole and the crew came popping out, two of them sputtering wings of fire.

Lamont, the co-driver who doubled as bow gunner, began to pour tracer into the scattering Germans. First the pair of Korean torches were put out of their agony

A third Nazi dropped squirming. Suddenly the second Tiger loomed.

"Let's nail him," Kroese began. "Driver, make eight-tenths—"

He got no further. The shell from an anti-tank gun lurking in the trees beyond the crossroads ripped through the top of the Sherman's turret and took his head off. It took only seconds for his crew to recover from the shock.

"You heard the skipper?" screamed

as Joe Fenn "Let's move it!" Blood sprayed down on him from Kroese's headless body slumped in the mangled barrel.

As Waco gained the tank off right and ahead, Milt Dobe slipped in a third 75 mm. round. Then Hitler's Heavies barreled straight for the Tiger, long gun pumping, loader ducking each hammerblow recoil, then picking in a new shell, while up front Lamont, gun-faced, kept the 30 calibre chattering until he stood





"Eat your lamb chops, Bo Peep."

ankle-deep in spent shells.

If the Tigers had deliberately advertised themselves to such the Sherman's within range of the anti-tank batteries, no one had time to worry about it. Simultaneous hits from German tanks and the hidden guns turned one of the Shermans into a 33-ton molten tomb. Another blundered back on the highway, struck into a salvo of 88s and blossoming flame, it spun in the middle of the road like a groundnut spin-castwheel. A third Sherman tripped an anti-tank mine which detonated its tracks and left it a monstrous cripple. Nazi artillery shells found it at once.

Two burning Tigers chased the crossroads. At Hitler's House lunchtime right at them, a German tank crewman stumbled blindly through searing smoke and impaled himself on the Sherman's steel hedgehog barrier.

The undamaged Tiger turned tail, road off down the road. Hitler's House, decapitated commander jack-knifed on the crumpled hatch and a showered Nazi up front, crawled with a clang off one of the

wrecked Tigers and took off after the fleeing Tiger. The only other Sherman still operating joined in and the crazy chase vanished south behind thickening smoke.

The date: July 29, 1944. Fourth day of Operation Cobra.

Almost eight weeks earlier the Allies had hit the Normandy beachhead. Securing the beachheads formed phase one of the overall plan. Phase two, the big buildup, began immediately. By mid-July more than 54,000

tons of ammunition, fuel, and equipment were pouring across the English Channel every day. Soon Allied troops captured the important port of Cherbourg and any moment now the wrecked harbor would be restored, doubling the rate of cross-channel buildup.

But the Nazi High Command had mostly recovered from the shock of D-Day. Adolf Hitler was fanatically optimistic. He had purged his top brass of defective elements. When Der Fuehrer heard that Field Marshal Karl Von Rundstedt had signed peace in the response to the Allied Normandy landing, he replaced him with Field Marshal Günther Von Kluge.

"You, my field marshal, will take command of the west," Hitler told him. "It will be your glorious task for the Fatherland to stop the Allied advance."

At first Von Kluge's hopes soared. All Allied threats had slowed. The British were temporarily stalled at Caen and General Omar Bradley's American troops had suffered fearful casualties as they drove along the Yon River to St Lo.

The struggle for St Lo left Bradley's troops exhausted. But to slack off now might spell suicide for the entire Allied endeavor, which had already fallen behind schedule. In any event, the question was academic. Pressing on had now become a matter of logistic necessity. Incoming supplies were piling up behind the weary advance troops. By July 29 the bridgeheads back of St Lo were crammed to bursting point.

Pressure from Washington and London mounted, concentrating most intensely on General Omar Bradley. At an officers' conference in his command post trailer Bradley outlined the situation. Intelligence reports verified that the Germans had their armor reserves committed to a line of defense immediately in

The first of the furphies

THE EXPRESSION "FURPHY", meaning a rascal or scoundrel, originated among the soldiers in Australian training camps in World War I.

John Murphy's foundry, established in Victoria in 1824, built metal-bodied wagons which were used in the many camps for military purposes. The wagons were stamped with the firm's name, and eventually the name Murphy came to be identified with the firms.

So a "Furphy" report was one which was passed along by soldiers who gossiped there. Such a report, oftened and exaggerated with each telling, was almost bound to become.

John Murphy's brother Joseph worked on a literary career, and wrote the classic Australian outback novel "Such Is Life". He published it under the pen-name "Tom Collins", and became famous himself under that name. Oddly enough, according to the later story from the name "Tom Collins" was itself a furphy.

front of St Lo.

"We can't seriously think of liberating Europe until we break out of here," Bradley gestured a finger at the wall map of Normandy. "There is no time to lose, gentlemen. We've got to find a way to break through this damn crust."

Before the conference had ended, Operation Cobra was born — a plan worked out with the guiding genius of General George Patton. The plan is a nutshell: soften the crust with massive air bombardment, then three infantry divisions under General Lawton Collins would hit the Germans on a 4000-yard front southwest of St Lo, forcing a gap through which the Second and Third Divisions could drive.

Once the gap was opened, Patton's Third Army tanks would pour through in a blitzkrieg sweep that would encircle masses of cut-off Nazi positions, then race on for Paris. Scheduled jumpoff date: July 23.

Meanwhile, Von Kluge was building up the defenders with battle-tested panzer divisions transferred from the Eastern battlefield. But the Field Marshal held no illusions about the terrible cost confronting him and he even wrote to Hitler about it:

"I came here with the fixed determination of making effective your order to stand fast at any price. But in spite of intense efforts, the moment has drawn near when the front, already so heavily strained, will break . . ."

Von Kluge knew the crust was



"First, there is something that I've always wanted to try."

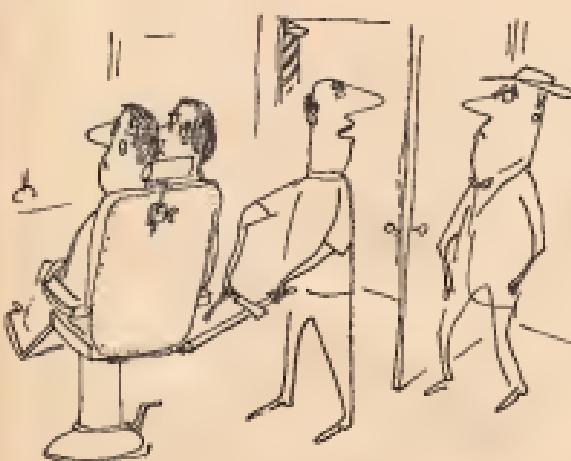
meanwhile on July 23, Fighter-bombers of the Ninth US Air Force struck first at 0930. Then for 60 deconking minutes, Flying Fortress and Liberators of Doolittle's Eighth Air Force saturated a rectangle four miles wide and 2500 yards deep with high explosive. Bombs accidentally fall on some of Lawton Collins' forward assault troops, killing scores of GIs, but the airborne onslaught had intended effect on the enemy.

Sad Pfeifer commander Fritz Bayerlein later: "The planes kept coming over at us like a conveyor belt. My flak had hardly opened its mouth when the business received direct hits which knocked out half the guns and silenced the rest. By noon nothing was visible but dust and smoke. My front lines looked like the face of the moon and at least 70 percent of my troops were out of action — dead, wounded, crumpled or stumbled. All my forward units were knocked out."

Bayerlein pulled his battered troops back from the St Lo-Penix road. Answering his desperate appeals for reinforcements, Von Kluge promoted fresh tank battalions. At the same time, less than a dozen miles to the north, General Collins poised his infantrymen for the assault. The enemy crust had been softened. It wasn't yet broken.

Allied tacticians saw Cobra as signaling a new era in combat co-ordination. In the hectic 30-day period from the fall of Cherbourg to the launching of Cobra, Bradley's First Army had carried out an intensive program of experiment and retraining aimed at perfecting co-operation between tanks and infantry, fighter-bombers and armored columns. Now, Bradley believed, it was time for the payoff.

Then Cobra succeeded to a bad start. Some American units were still badly shaken up after the bombing they had suffered from their own planes. Spearhead units of the Ninth,



"Oh, no, just two guys who couldn't decide who won next."

Fourth and Thirtieth Divisions driving south from the St Lo-Pontor road, ran headlong into a swarm of Panthers backed by half-tracked Tigers, gun barrels pointing above ground like steel oilbooms. The spearhead troops were cut to pieces.

Lavton Collins was a general dedicated to swift action. Under present plans the infantry was supposed to breach the bomb-softened enemy lines so Allied armor could race through and fan out south, east and west. In other words, the spearhead of the attempted breakthrough was made of infantry. Flesh and blood. And instead of penetrating the crest, it was pulverizing itself against Panther steel. By dawn on July 26 only two miles had been gained along the route to the first objectives, St Gilles and Manory.

Collins thought fast. Why not pit tank against tank? Sure, tank for tank and gun for gun the Germans could justifiably claim superiority. In head-on encounter the Panthers and Tigers had thicker armor and their 75s and 88s enjoyed the longer range. But the odds were leveled off in hedgehog country which ruled out long-distance engagements. Then the Sherman's superior maneuverability in close combat was a potentially decisive factor.

And the Shermans would go into action as veritable tank-builders, able to plow through hedgerows and forests at topspeed with the tank-like prongs and sawtooth blades that



"It's the second door to the right, and please hurry back so we can finish."

could slash tangled roots and slice through even 18-inch tree trunks.

It took Lavton Collins little time to reach a decision. Search planes. Unleash the tanks ahead of the infantry. Arms against armor. And it was still short of noon on July 26 when redeployment orders were flashed to US armored division commanders.

Collins had split his armored units into two main forces: Combat

Command A and Combat Command B. They both jumped off before midday and by mid-afternoon American tanks, half-tracks, and heavy 155 mm self-propelled artillery units were racing through a 25-mile corridor between the Vire River on the east and the English Channel to the west.

Bomb-crushed St Gilles and Manory were quickly gobbed up and under a blazing sun the armored armada swept over debris-strown highways. Infantrymen rode the outside of the tanks, braced, ready to leap off and into action with rifles and grenades should a Nazi machine-grenade nest try to harass the column's progress.

In forest country at Carentan five miles northwest of St Lo the road ahead of the 67th Armored Regiment's leading tanks suddenly erupted in a storm of German bazookas.

A tank force of hitchhiking GIs jumped off the following tanks, plunged through trees, and crept up on the bazooka crew. Gruntly they noted the weapon's size. Known as the Panzerfaust, the German version of the bazooka was twice the size of its American counterpart, and could shoot a seven-pound missile through 4 inches of armor at 165 yards.

The GIs deluged the emphasizes with hand grenades and a machine-gun team got to work. Within 50 feet and poured belt after belt into the Panzerfaust crews. The 67th need air ...



Queensland's peculiar lungfish

ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S strangest freshwater fish is the Queensland lungfish, which can survive in water or on land.

The lungfish, named *Neoceratodus* by scientists, was first discovered in the Mary and Burnett Rivers in North Queensland. It is good eating, and has more recently been reproduced in other streams further south.

The lungfish breathes air into a lung developed from a primitive "swim-bladder". It has no lungs for breath every half hour or so, lifting the end of its snout out of the water and inhaling and lifting its lung with a curious snoring sound.

Scientists believe the lungfish became adapted to air breathing to help it survive in seasons of drought. By breathing air it could survive longer in a shrinking water hole, and then drag itself out of the mud and wriggle over dry land to a larger pool.

The lungfish is long and eel-like, with muscular, fleshy fins. It grows to about six feet in length, and lives a great age.

York infantrymen perched on ruined-hut banks, cursed the sun and sweat. The Normandy countryside reeked of death. The fields and barn-tattered towns were full junkyards littered with wrecked armor and decomposing dead.

One of Collins' main spearheads was thrusting due south to cut the east-west highway between Tilly and the Channel coast. A battalion of the 66th Armored Regiment reached Le Manoir Herman, its first strategic objective, at 0300 July 27. The Germans were waiting.

The battalion command half-track was shattered by GIs and only the outfit's CO and a machine gunner survived out alive. They mounted the back of a company commander's Sherman and its T3 followed at a pair of optimized Tigers side by side 50 yards away.

Then the company commander suddenly roared, "Come fast! Come fast!" American infantrymen had slipped from the shadows and were swimming up the Tiger's sides, tossing grenades inside the tanks before the Germans could button up. As the GIs dove off and evaporated among the ruins, internal explosions all but boozed the Tigers off their tracks.

By dawn when the armored battalion clanked a further six miles and reached the vital crossroads near Villers-Bocage, it had accounted for another five tanks, a self-propelled 88 mm gun, and six anti-tank guns. The battalion's progress had also cost 100 killed and wounded.

Other armed spearheads had swung right, making for Carentan and the coast. Moving fast now they were in the line to cut off the entire 84th German corps occupying the Cotentin Peninsula. Reaching to the threat Von Kluge rushed the 2nd and 17th SS Panzer Divisions into Normandy under Fritz Bayerlein's overall command. His orders: "Stop the Americans at all costs!"

A powerful new Jagdpanther squatting on the blacktop west of Mamrey was positioned to do just that as Battery B of the US 480th Armored Anti-Aircraft Battalion came rumbling out of the ruined town. The Germans' 88 mm gun was already belching and ears of the American gunners placed their round stick on target, so hardened in their ordeal we able to pierce the Jagdpanther's 80-millimeter-thick front plate.

The American mobile batteries opened up anyway. Under a cascade of flying shrapnel, Captain Phil Shaw,

Battery B's commander, led three men on foot, zig-zagging right up under the nose of the 48-ton monster tank. Working fast they shredded its bogey wheels with TNT packages. When the Nazi's cover popped open, out of curiosity Shaw grabbed the chance to drop a grenade inside.

Suddenly the big tank was dancing under the impact of internal and external explosions. Bloodied and half-blinded, three of the German crew squirmed out and a dozen Americans ganged up on them, one inexplicably brandishing an axe. Two German crewmen were captured. The third shrieked "Heil Hitler", and shot himself in the head.

To avoid entrapment the German 84th Corps would have to push south across the Seine River. Allied snipers moved south-west with the object of beating them to the bridges.

The highway led through Notes Dame, where Fritz Bayerlein's Panzer Lehr had concealed itself in the surrounding country and was all set to pounce. Curious of this, Colonel Richard Nelson led an advance guard of the 6th Armored Regiment through the ruined main street, upright in his tank turret and taking pot-shots with a Webley pistol at scattering German infantrymen.

(Continued on page 63)



"You've got a problem, Ralph."

BEST BAIT

I reckoned Mac was stealing my crayfish, and it looked like he was stealing my wife too. He'd have to go . . .

FICTION / J. EDWARD BROWN

"I SHOULD NEVER have come to the godforsaken hole," Noelle shouted. "I must have been mad. There's nothing to do, nobody to talk to except the cat and fishermen."

We were in our canoe. Noelle was only two feet away from me. Her shouting was deafening.

"You'd rather live like Mac, in a paper," she told me.

That wasn't true. I like to be comfortable, that's why I'd imported the canoe to this fishing camp on the Chatham Islands at great expense. It was warm, clean. But Noelle was houseproud. I was supposed to take my gumboots off at the door. But I hadn't thought and I'd brought in sand again. She swept it up with a broom.

"Mac would appreciate a nice comfortable clean canoe like this," Noelle said.

How did Mac's name get into this? "It seems to me you're always quoting Mac lately," I said angrily.

And suddenly I knew. Those knowing looks between Mac and her. Things I'd overheard.

"You should have married a chick who wears a suit to the office every day, not a fisherman." I said, suddenly much quieter. "Why don't you go home to your mother?"

"I will," she mumbled.

She always said she would, but she never did.

I was after crayfish — lobsters, the Americans call them. It was easy work and big dough. But it was no life for a woman. The nearest place of civilization was 40 miles away, and that was Waitangi where there was only a pub and a general store, and then it was 500 miles west across the Pacific to New Zealand.

She'd been in this fishing camp for two years. It was lonely for her. Though she had the cat for company, a pedigree Siamese. Perhaps next Christmas we'd go back to the mainland for a short holiday. Have ourselves a good time. She deserved a break.

"Only another year," I said.

"That's what you say every year."

"If my boat hadn't been wrecked."

"It," she said angrily.

"The price of crayfish has gone up again this year. I'll clear \$10,000. It'll get me back on my feet."

"You must have enough now. You're never satisfied." She slammed the aluminum door of the canoe behind her. I could see her walking around the curve of the beach towards the wreck of my concrete boat. Maybe it symbolized the wreckage of our marriage.

The boat had broken her moor-

ings one night in a gale and gone up on the beach and been pounded to pieces. I had lost \$20,000 that night — and no insurance. But that was the sort of fishing in a remote place like the Chathams Islands.

I went over to Mac's hut. He hadn't been shaped enough to get married. He had his feet up on the table, a bottle of beer open, and he was reading an old magazine. The hut was crudely built — a rough bark, a rough table, made on the wall, a bottled gas stove, lamp shades made of old gallon paint tins cut down, a big bell-ant.

"I thought I heard my name mentioned," he said cheerfully.

"Was it?" I said. "You're lucky you never got married."

He grinned at me. He went to Waitangi once a month maybe and got drunk. There were a few girls around.

I looked around at his disordered place. "She's so bloody clean, that's the trouble," I said.

He passed me a dirty glass and I poured myself a beer.

I'd had the canoe shipped across to the island and then lifted into place with the helicopter which loaded and unloaded the cray boats in the bay. It was the way of the whole population. The few other married people tried to rough it, made of soap lumber, nothing comfortable about them.

But I had other problems. "Somebody has been lifting my pots, stealing my crayfish," I told Mac.

"If you haven't got any pots nobody can steal cray from them," Mac said. He grinned; he was a skinflint. "I pick my cray straight off the bottom."

"Own nothing, not even a woman," I said.

But my pots seemed to have been the hardest hit. Nobody knew who had been doing it, though I had an idea it was Mac with his underwater gear. Captain crayfish were easier to catch than those crawling free on the ocean floor. And Mac ranged widely in his search while we more conventional pot fishermen stayed in our own particular area.

"Something will have to be done about this thief," I said seriously. "And one day we'll catch him."

"What will happen to him?" Mac asked.

"If I catch him, I'll feed him to the fish," I said.

Mac laughed and opened a bottle of whisky. We got on to the subject of women, again.

"It's a wonder there hasn't been trouble here with the few women



and the crowd of men," Mac said.

"Why should there be? The women are all married."

He laughed. "They're the worst. Oh, Noosken excepted of course."

"Does that buggery go on around here?" I asked as neatly as possible.

"So I hear," he said.

"A husband can't feel a man when he finds out."

"Yeah," he said, and he grinned too widely. "If he ever finds out."

He passed the bottle.

I was sure now.

We drank the bottle between us and I staggered back to the caravan very late and turned the cat off my side of the bunk. That was another thing — the cat didn't make friends. It only allowed itself in to be appreciated by Noosken and me — and lastly Mac.

* * *

Things weren't much better in the morning.

"Will you be away overnight?"

Noosken snapped.

"Yes."

She moved the bowl of artificial fruit to the window. There was no real fruit on the island. I had heard a sheep farmer grew apples in a sheltered orchard, but I had never seen them.

Mac was going past. He saw the fruit and he almost arrived at Noosken before he saw me. Did I interpret the look correctly? I think I did.



Peltier

"Just what do you mean Henry by 'That's the way the cookie crumbles'?"

Anyway, I knew I was going to get Mac.

If Mac's boat didn't come back, everybody would understand. It had a rusted prop and the company wanted 75 dollars to ship it, but he

was too mean to get it done. He'd also been having trouble with a salt water cooking line. The pipe had rotted through and he'd repaired it temporarily with a piece of rubber hose pipe. If that was removed the boat would fill up, and he'd be drowned.

It was a shame to dissolve a good friendship because of a woman. But poaching a woman was as bad as poaching crayfish pots. I put on my parka and gumboots, and started the caravan slowly behind me.

The camp was a lonely rough place, rusty crayfish pots, red and yellow plastic flots, the men's wooden mess hut, the big corrugated iron latrine, flux and sand, mountains of empty oil drums, the roar of the sea, the roar of the diesel engine supplying power to the packing company freezer, and the stark of fact used as bait.

No, it was no place for a woman, especially a good-looking gal like Noosken. There was nothing for her to do in the caravan except clean it. But a man got lonely. I'd been here a year before I'd brought Noosken over.

Then I put those thoughts out of my mind. Mac was a poacher. And he was going to get what he deserved.

I sniffed the air as I rowed out. It was fresh and clean out in the bay. It was a pity a man had to go about, I thought.



"It's a pleasure trip for me and a business trip for her."

Sydney's aboriginal rock-carvings

THE OLD ABORIGINAL ROCK-CARVINGS in the area around Sydney and the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales make up one of the finest examples of primitive art in the world.

Having no written language, the Aborigines cut their tribal records into stone faces in selected parts of their tribal territory. Some of the carvings have been made at the last few centuries, but others in the area are estimated to be several thousand years old.

Hundreds of the carvings have been destroyed, and more are being found every year. Most are representations of a few individuals, but some show groups of a hundred or more.

Most of the carvings are blindfold, but some are recessive, and some are of figures more than 60 feet long. Some show half-human, half-animal constituents of Aboriginal mythology.

The Aborigines made the carvings by drawing a picture on the rock with a burnt stick, and then scratching in the lines with a sharp-pointed piece of stone. The most popular locations were in caves and cliff overhangs, along river banklines and creek beds and on rock platforms.

Kangaroos and wallabies are the animals most often shown. The goanna is the commonest reptile, and the tree is the commonest bird. The fish of the carvings include sharks, rays and eels.

Some of the carvings are of singular archaeological importance, showing Aboriginal weapons, tools and ornaments, and scenes of tobacco ritual and hunting, all of a way of life long since passed away.

I had a day boat with a small cabin, a single bunk. It was all I could afford after the wreck of my big boat.

I let go and headed out of the bay. Mac was just ahead of me. He waved and I waved back.

I had 40 pots, which is a large number for one man to service, but I wanted to make as much money as I could in as short a time as possible. I often stayed out overnight so I could get in a full day's work.

But Mac always went back to the fishing camp. And I was damned sure now that he was sneaking into my dugout when I wasn't there, and everybody was laughing behind my back. I could understand, now, some of the remarks I'd overheard.

I knew Mac was working the area where I had my pots, and that was very convenient. I always believed in having a decent feed at midday, and today I anchored for it. Mac came up alongside and we had a beer together.

I had a poor haul, less than a hundred pounds of crays on deck. They keep alive for a couple of days out of the water, provided they are kept damp and out of the wind.

"I hope you haven't been into my pots," I said, rather sharper than I intended.

Mac looked at me reproachfully. "How could you?" he said.

"Somebody has been at my pots," I continued.

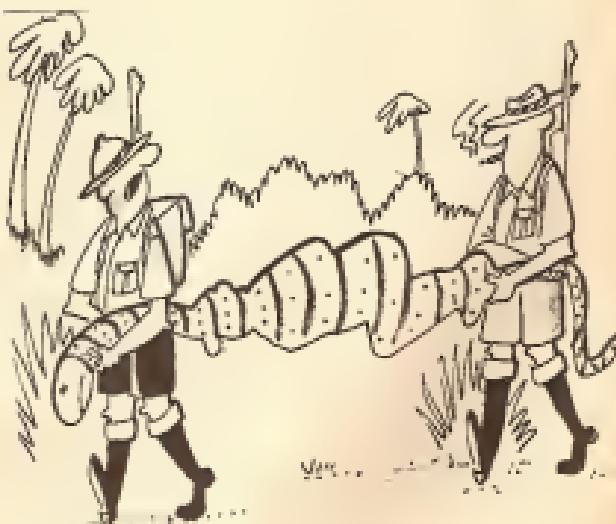
"It would be like poaching your friend's wife."

"Yes," I said.

"You want to take to skin diving," he said. "That's the way to catch them. But then you're scared of the water, aren't you?"

I really hated him then. He was the only person I'd told about my fear.

"The sea is your friend," he said again.



"Leave it to Carter to figure out a way to get carried back to camp."

"I prefer to work on deck," I said slowly.

Mac went back into the net. I knew where every boat fishing was today, more or less, and we were the only two down in this bay. I'd kept the ship-shore radio on all morning and there wasn't anybody a-starve

I got into my wet suit. I don't really care for skin diving. I'd bought a suit and mask, but the water frightened me. There was waving top, barracouts and other scary things. I was always afraid of sharks coming up behind me and snapping off my leg.

I'd never really liked handling crayfish either, with their many legs and their big eyes. But they were worth money, and that overcame my repugnance.

I could see Mac's snorkel close instead. I went over the side. It was a cold day and the water was grey and cloudy.

He was a better underwater man than I would ever be, but I had him driving me on. He appeared ahead of me and I came up to him and grabbed him from behind. Maybe he thought it was a shark. He turned. His eyes were big behind the mask glass. He opened his mouth, lost his grip, and I was all top of him, holding him down.

He was struggling with a knife at his belt, but I had mine out quicker and I stabbed him. He dropped the knife. There was dark fluid escaping

from his wet suit. He looked at it in horror.

Now he was trying to unclip the heavy weights around his waist so he could pop up like a cork. But I had his hands. He was still struggling violently. But he was going to drown.

Once I broke the surface and I snatched a quick breath. But Mac didn't make the surface. I had my hands around his head now, and he was weakening.

And eventually he was quiet.

was no longer alive.

The disappearance of Mac caused some concern. I'd gone out to search along with other boats, but nobody found a trace of him or his boat.

I lifted those net pots two weeks later and I got the best haul I'd ever had. The pots were so full I had difficulty hauling them out.

Other fishermen wanted to know where I'd got such huge crayfish. They hadn't seen them that size in a long time. But I just smiled and kept

THE CAPE YORK KILLER

Continued from page 8

He stood there defiantly, blood running down his bare chest. Spittle drooled from his mouth. Wild-eyed, he fired the rifle again.

Murray jerked loose from Kern's grip and ran out on deck.

"Give me that rifle, you shot!" he shouted.

Walcha half turned "No, boss!" he spat out.

Murray charged at him. The man on the headland stopped firing, surprised. Murray grabbed for the rifle but Walcha pulled it back.

Walcha jerked the heavy wooden butt forward and hit Murray on the side of the head. Murray collapsed unconscious on the deck.

Walcha stood quite still, then toppled and fell across Murray's legs.

"You shot!" Kern cried. She ran forward and tried to drag Murray back into the shelter of the wheelhouse.

But Murray was too heavy. And "Bermuda" was out of control now. Slowly, her bow swung around.

The diesel motor drove her relentlessly towards the headland.

* * *

Murray felt his aching head and opened his eyes. The faces above him were blurred. He blinked a few times and tried to focus. He was on his bunk.

"Are you all right, love?" Kern asked anxiously.

Murray yawned. "Yeah," he said. He sat up unsteadily. He looked at Bush Hayes, Dooley and the other men in the cabin.

"How's Walcha?" he asked painfully.

"He's dead," Bush Hayes replied. "He died up on deck a few minutes ago. Your boat ran on to the mud flats. That's how we got aboard."

"We're sorry about what happened," Bush Hayes said awkwardly. "We found Bremer's gold watch and money among Walcha's things."

Murray nodded slowly. "I guessed it was him when I saw the whisky on board. Walcha couldn't handle the booze. I wouldn't let him drink."

"Dad must have caught him stealing the whisky," Kern said sadly.

"Yeah," Murray said. He looked at her. "What are you going to do now?"

Kern's eyes brightened. "I'm going down to Cooktown with you. That's if you'll have me!"

Murray squared her arm. He looked up at her and grinned.

"Now I come to think of it, I need a new deck hand," he said.

Menace of the marsupial cats

IF BUSHMEN LIVING alone in the old days didn't have a dog or cat, they often found they had other company — a native cat, or a family of them.

These bushy-tailed carnivores — no relatives to the felines — live by nature among the rocks in hilly country. They prey on birds, rodents and insects and have as many as eight young at a time.

A native cat will come into a human dwelling to live, but seldom gets tame or even shows itself though it may be heard mewing about after lights are put out at night.

Often they do no harm, but sometimes they break crockery in their nocturnal comings and goings.

If a native cat takes a fancy to the farmer's poultry, its presence is advertised by blood-curdling roars from the hen in the predator rocks. Blood flows there like a vampire bat.

Once a tender, rushing out, found three pullets dead and caught the native cat in the act. He struck at the monster with a shovel, chopping the red off its tail.

It then fled, but thinking it might return later, the man writer set two rabbit traps in the pullet coop and secured them with stones.

Slow enough the marauder came again later and was caught in the two traps. Then it was killed — 30 miles from home in tail of splitting fury.

my mouth shut.

Noeleen and I eat a lot of crayfish. We never get tired of it, and I took home a real beauty from those special pots. Noeleen had been off her food for the last week.

"I'll make you a crayfish omelet," I said. And I coated myself. It was light and fluffy and the crayfish cooked with cheese was just right.

"This one has a nice flavor," I said with my first bite.

"Yum," Noeleen said and bit into it with enjoyment. It was the first decent meal she'd eaten since Mac's disappearance.

"I wonder what happened to poor Mac?" I said as I finished. "Crayfish omelet was one of his favorites."

And Noeleen sighed sadly as she ate.

I looked at her fondly. Life was good. The bowl of fruit never went to the window now. And I had carefully taken off my gumboots at the door so I didn't track in sand. After all, a man has to be a bit understanding.

I undid the rubber hose of his boat and cast her in the bay only a hundred yards from the shore. I didn't want to go too far out and be seen by the other boats. She filled surprisingly quickly and went down by the bow with hardly a murmur.

And Mac, of course, was in the bay too. I worried for some days it was somebody poached those pots but it didn't happen the poacher



VENGEANCE IN THE SWAMP

Continued from page 12

"Did Styles know them?"

"Oh, yeah!" Kip "Lefty" ... I forgot the other two. But he knew them all by name. Anyway, Styles got up and went off with them."

Just then Morrison came back into the doorway and called to him: "Dane, something's come up." They went outside. Morrison's face was tense. "This ain't pretty," he said.

"Stop drawing on it. What happened?"

"He was probably looking for you. He found Karen naked."

"What are you saying?"

"Styles ... there were seven others with him. I guess they raped the hell out of her. She's at Doc Duncan's place and I guess she's in bad shape."

They got back to Driscoll on half the time it had taken Farms coming out. They went in Morrison's police jeep with Farms driving, right to Doc Duncan's cottage. Duncan was the only doctor for a dozen or so towns along that edge of the swamp. As the two men walked in, he said, "Savine Ires is supposed to be my business. But I'd skin all those bastards and hang them out in the sun if I could. She's in the back bedroom."

Farms went in by himself. Morrison made no attempt to go in with him. The girl was lying in bed as still as a stone, with the sheet drawn up to her chin. Her face was badly beaten, her nose and mouth were bruised and her eyes were puffed up as big as fists and turned bluish purple. Her head was swathed in tape and bandages.

"Who was with them, honey?" Farms asked.

"It was Styles and some others." She made the words sound as though saying each one of them constituted a real effort. "Those crazy bastards — you remember — you brought them in for burning barns —"

"The Collens?"

"Yes, the Collens. The two Collens ... and two others ... and Styles. I fought them. Dave I really —"

"Get some sleep, honey." Farms went out to the livingroom where the Morrison and Duncan were waiting for him.

"Did she tell you who the others were, Dave?" Morrison said.

Farms shook his head. "Styles was the only one the could identify."

Within an hour of leaving Duncan's house, the two men were on their way into the swamp. They each carried a rifle, a knife, a hand axe, a length of rope, a light bedroll, and a small sack of provisions. They went on foot with Farms leading the way. He knew the country and just about everyone who lived in it.

They'd been trudging along for close to an hour. "I guess," Morrison said, "what it is, is that Styles' mob has hired some swindling people to take care of him, his law and so forth, until they're able to come and get him. That's the angle we ought to be working on. You know these people in here pretty well. Who do you think the mob would pick?"

Farms shrugged. "Could be anybody. There's lots of sport to hide a man out here and everybody's got some places no one else knows about."

"Yeah, I guess that's the way it would be," Morrison said glumly.

They went on until past sundown. They were on soggy ground most of the time and often actually in water. The air was warm and still even after the sun went down. They kept hearing the rustling sounds of small animals in the growth all about and the never-ending scraps and buzz of insects. They went on steadily until Morrison asked, "You know where you're going? You know we isn't just going around in circles?"

"We're going in the right direction," Farms said. "There's the woman I want to talk to. She knows a lot about what goes on out here."

Around midnight, Farms at last came to a stop and pointed through the trees to a small light ahead of him. "That's her place," he said. "She won't talk if she sees a lawman. So you better wait here and I'll come back for you when I'm through."

"Who is she?" Morrison demanded. "What's the woman about a lawman for?"



"But we already have a used automobile, license plates of you and me playing cards; a big walk-through plastic tunnel three fishing net modules and a self-destructing sculpture we're afraid to plug in."

"She's a prostitute," Fornis said.
"You know the way prostitutes are."

He went forward and a few minutes later stood on the steps of the small, shanty house. The inside was lit up by bright lanterns. A dog barked somewhere, and a woman called out.

"What's that out there?"

"Mormon! Come on, open up I come a hundred miles tonight just to experience the pleasure of your company."

The door opened inward. The woman who was in her late twenties. She wore black boots, a full skirt, a blouse that showed her breasts in outline and detail. She was tall and her blond hair was piled atop her head. At the sight of Fornis she laughed. "I didn't recognize your voice, Dave. If I had, I wouldn't have opened the door. What do you want?"

"I'm looking for Roy and Andy," he said. "Where are your brothers, Sarah? I've got to find them."

"You finding Roy and Andy don't interest me," Sarah Cullen said. "I ain't seen them."

His hand shot forward like a rifle, striking his head back against a wall. Her eyes opened wide in amazement. Her own hands came up, trying to pull his fire, but he was much too strong for her.

"They raped a woman today, Sarah," he said. "They raped her real bad. I'm out here with Mormon looking for them and if you don't tell me where they are that's going to make you an accessory. If the woman dies they'll make it even worse for you. Where are your brothers, Sarah?"

She gasped, choked, tried to catch her breath. She panted. "I hasn't seen them in weeks. I don't know anything about them raping any woman."

"You're a close family, Sarah. You know where they are. I'm not feeling about you being an accessory. Mormon's out there waiting for me. If I bring him in here and tell him you know where your brothers are and won't tell us, you'll be as good as in the jug, Sarah."

She spoke quickly, stumbling over the words. "All right, all right, you'd only get them anyway, wouldn't you?"

"That's right, we'd get them in any case," Fornis said, "only this way you're not in any trouble and the other way you would be."

"All right, I'll—"

"There's one other thing, Sarah," Fornis said. "We're going out of here the back way. We're not taking Mormon with us."



"I don't understand."

"Don't worry about it, Sarah. It's just the way we're doing it, that's all!"

They went out a back window and continued deeper into the swamp. The woman led and Fornis followed close behind her. She stumbled several times, tripping over rocks or roots. But it was past three in the morning before Fornis agreed to stop for coffee.

The woman sank down to the ground. "I couldn't have gone another step."

Fornis made a small fire and took what he needed to make coffee out of his sack of provisions. They boiled on a dry swamp island until first light, then moved on.

With the sky turning the pinkish grey of morning, they reached the edge of a wooded area and saw five men down below them. Among them were Roy and Andy Cullen, also a man named Higgins and another names Peal (both of them longtime friends of the Cullens). There was also a tremendous man who Fornis recognized as "King Kong" Styles.

Sarah Cullen was exhausted, emotionally drained and physically worn out. The men had apparently just finished their breakfast and now they sat around what was left of their fire, smoking and talking. Fornis couldn't hear what they said, but he could make out a good deal of laughter.

The woman leaned over. "What'll they get for what they done? Six months? Maybe a year?" Fornis didn't answer.

"You get the drop on them, all right," she said. "You ought to be

able to bring them back to Desoto without any of them getting hurt." But Fornis still didn't answer, and suddenly her eyes went wide and her voice was strangely ragged. "Now, I know why you left Mormon out of it. You don't want to arrest them. You don't want to bring them in. You want to kill them!"

She screamed suddenly. "Roy! An—"

Fornis saw agitated movement at the bottom of the slope. He grabbed the woman, hauled her straight down through the brush. She went crashing through it, flailing her arms and screaming.

To the men below it probably was impossible to make out what was coming at them. Garfield ripped up the slope. Lying on top of it, but under cover, Fornis saw the woman collapse, dropping suddenly. One moment she was running and the next she was lying as limp as a sack of old clothes, the gun shots still echoing.

Then, a voice, outraged and agonized cried out. "My God, it's Sarah. We killed Sarah."

Fornis made out a figure charging up the slope. It was Roy, the older of the two brothers. Behind him voices shouted unmercifully. One voice had a burly New York City accent. "Roy! Where are you going, you killin' bitch? You're supposed to be taking care of me."

Quickly, Fornis fell back. Roy Cullen darted past him. He was a red-faced man with a vicious temper, the kind people called a "young animal". Yet, like so many of those in the swamp, he had a strong sense of family loyalty. And the fact that



he'd just been involved in the killing of his sister had driven him beserk. He rampaged through the swamp "There you are, you son of a bitch! It ain't going to do you no good to run like hell."

Ferns dropped about 20 yards behind him, just far enough to keep him in sight. Then he began closing the gap, moving faster Cullen moved into an area of thicker growth, the trees spaced farther apart. He was still following madly, however, swinging both his arms, one hand holding a rifle. Now something that looked like a pond came into view ahead of him. "Yeah, that's nice, Roy," Ferns said. He chose a thick, vine-covered broken branch for a weapon and closed in.

When he was 20 feet away, Cullen heard him and swung around, his face gone into a scowl snarl. For a moment it seemed that Cullen would get his rifle around in time to put a shot into Ferns' body. But then the long-sounding gurgle went inside the rifle, chopping down with the branch at the same time and ripping Cullen's neck halfway down to his shoulder. Cullen dropped at his feet, shaking with pain and shock.

"Jesus! You got me bad, Dave," Cullen whispered hoarsely. "We got to do something fast or I'm going to bleed to death."

"You're not going to bleed to death, Roy," Ferns said. "I got something else in mind for you."

He grabbed Cullen by the collar and yanked him down to the ground and then dragged him toward the wet patch that looked like a pond from a distance. But the shimmer of water disappeared as you came up next to it,

so that suddenly it wasn't a pond at all but a circular expanse of quicksand. Cullen squawked when Ferns grabbed him, but that had been a squawk of pain compared to his sprang wound. Now, however, the squawk took on a different quality entirely, becoming raw fear. "Jesus, Dave, Jesus, Dave, what are you going to do?"

Ferns pulled him back up to his feet, heaving him into the ground and then herded him into the bog. Cullen landed in a sprawling position, hands and rump down. He screamed and twisted his head around. He couldn't free his hands from the snare.

"Dave, Dave, please! Oh, my God, Dave! Not this way I'm going down ... I'm going down!"

Ferns crouched at the edge of the quicksand. His eyes were as cold as stones. "You boys have a good time with Karen, Roy?" he asked. "Get yourself a few laughs out of it? Must have been real fun when she fought you. That always makes it better, doesn't it?"

"It was all Styles' doing," Cullen sobbed. "He wanted to get even with you for tracking him down. We just kind of went along."

The quicksand was up to his neck. His head rolled madly about it. Tears streamed down his face. His screams took on a strangled quality as quicksand spilled into his mouth. Moments later the sand reached his forehead, and continued sucking him in until he was entirely out of sight.

As soon as he was gone, Ferns stood up and started back toward where the others had been. He crossed the slope and heard the

sounds of an argument and as he looked down through the brush, he could make out the second Cullen brother, Andy, carrying King Kong Styles with a rifle. Higgins and Paul were standing to the side. Ferns had a downhill view of Styles from behind. The New York gunman had the build and probably the strength of a professional wrestler.

"We're paying you plenty to take care of me, you swamp bastard," Styles roared. It was obvious he wanted to rush Andy Cullen, but wouldn't with that rifle aimed straight at his chest. "We ain't paying you to bury your sister. We didn't even know you had a sister. What the hell is it to us?"

"This is a family matter, Styles. Down here family matters come first," Cullen said. "You just go ahead with those two boys and I'll catch up with you."

"We ain't paying you to catch up."

"Go ahead, Styles! Damn it, go ahead," Cullen shouted. "Can't you tell when a man's got his mind made up?"

They continued to glare at each other, but finally the swamp man's determination registered on Styles and he lunged himself away, growling at the other two to come along. "Which way do we go, for skrimshin'? What the hell do I know about this jungle?"

Cullen watched them leave. Then he put his rifle down, picked up a shovel and began digging in the soft, wet ground. Sarah's body lay close to where he was working. Ferns started working down toward her, keeping himself hidden and moving slowly. He wound up about 10 yards up the slope and stayed there until Cullen had finished his grave and was about to climb out of it.

Then Ferns rose up out of the brush he'd been hiding in. "That ain't quite deep enough, Andy."

Cullen stood as though turned to stone. When at last he spoke it was in a high-pitched, quivering voice. "What do you mean, Dave?"

Ferns said. "You're going to need a deeper grave than that, Andy. Keep digging."

Cullen threw out another shovelful of dirt. His face was wet with sweat. He said, "We didn't mean her no real harm, Dave. If she hadn't done all that fighting..."

"Keep digging. I said. Keep digging."

"Bastards, it was Styles' idea. Honest to God, Dave. It was all his idea and he was the one that beat up on her, too. He forced us into doing it with him."

Suddenly Ferns jumped aside. A shovelful of dirt flew towards him. Behind it came Andy Cullen. His face was wild. The shovel was poised over his head.

Ferns fired a single shot into the middle of Cullen's face, sending him backward onto the pile of dirt at the edge of the grave. He watched a few moments, saw the other wasn't moving and went down to look at him.

"Hell, he didn't think I was going to run at three yards, did he?" Ferns said to himself.

He took Cullen by one foot and dragged him to the grave. Then he dumped Death in on top of her brother. He shovelled the dirt over them, then threw some rocks and gravel on top of the grave. He started off in the direction the others had gone.

Ferns went deeper into the swamp, and by and-dilibrium was at an area called The Bottoms Here, the swammin' was calmer and a number of the shacks were actually raised up on stilts. The people who lived here were steadily forgotten by time and their governments. They figured no one came. They went to no schools. Scoury and vicious were endemic to them and some of them were clearly fistic-minded, the products of inbreeding.

They viewed strangers with suspicion and fear, and Ferns encountered nothing but stolen drags or passing stares whenever he stopped to ask someone about Huggins and Paul. They came from The Bottoms and he was going under the assumption that they'd return there with "King Kong" Styles.

It was close to sundown when he reached the settlement called Hawkins Corner. It consisted of a store and half a dozen shacks. When Ferns went into the store, he was startled to see Morrison standing at the counter talking to the proprietor, Hawkins. Several other people stood a distance off, watching curiously.

Ferns cursed under his breath and thought about slapping back outside before Morrison saw him, but it seemed impractical, particularly as Morrison turned toward him just at that moment.

"What the hell happened to you?" Morrison demanded. "What happened back at that place?"

"She went out the back window and I had to go out after her," Ferns said. "Didn't you hear me holler that I was going after her?"

"I don't know anything about any hollering," Morrison said suspiciously.

"What happened then?"

"I lost her in the swamp, in the dark. How about you?"

"I got a look at Styles and two others running in the woods," Morrison said. "But I couldn't get close enough to get a shot at them. They were coming in this direction, so I came along behind them, but now I can't get damn thing out of Hawkins. Either he's an idiot or he's pulling it on."

"He's no idiot," Ferns said. "Hawkins is one of the few of them around here that's still got any sense. Hell, I'll talk to him."

Ferns approached the counter. Hawkins watched him apprehensively. "We're looking for Paul and Huggins and a big elephant of a man from New York, Ben. You know we wouldn't becker coming way out to this hole if it wasn't for something serious. Now, you don't want to become an accessory. Do you, Ben? You know what an accessory is? An accessory is somebody that gets himself thrown into Yankerville for not telling us about something that someone else did. So supposing you tell us about Paul and Huggins and the big New York guy. Did they come through here or didn't they?"

"I was in Yankerville once. Maybe

nineteen - twelve years ago. They had a guard used to whump us around with an iron bar. Today it's all lawyers and judges making them take it easy."

"Stop walking me around, Ben," Ferns said. "You heard what I asked you."

Hawkins darted his eyes to the men watching him. Then he spoke quickly, lowering his voice. "They come through here about an hour ago, Ben."

"They stop for anything?"

"No, they were risking crap."

"Which way were they heading?"

"Heading west."

"They better have been heading west. If not, you're going to be back in Yankerville and we'll prosecute that混蛋 with the iron bar just to make you feel at home."

He rejoined Morrison and the two men went back outside. Ferns said, "Even heading west, there's a couple of different routes they could have taken out of here. Supposing we each take one..."

"No, we'll stick together," Morrison said.

Ferns shrugged. "Suit yourself." They left Hawkins' Corner moving westward with the sun sinking.



"Sorry to awaken you, ma'am, but . . ."



"We had a little *borry* of excitement here tonight, Marge . . .
The remote control broke and Harry moved."

directly ahead of them slinging down through the trees like an orange balloon. A trail of sorts stretched out ahead and they moved out along it. Farns led. They went on in silence until the sun went down, and then for another hour past it. Then, with total darkness sinking in, Farns remarked "I don't have my axe I must have left it back there at Hawkins' place."

"You'll get it on the way back."

"No, I need it now. I'm going to have to go back for it."

"Are you crazy?" His voice was enraged, disbelieving. "You can't go back for it."

"Yeah, I got it," Farns said. "I feel naked without it."

He started back through the swamp with Mormons coming and shouting from behind him. "Come back here, you son of a bitch. What do you think you're doing?"

"Just let me take care of this other matter first," Farns yelled out as he ran back along the trail. He reached Hawkins' Counter and, without stopping to look around, ran right to the store. He gritted in satisfaction at what he saw there. "Yeah, I figured this one right. Didn't I?"

A fire was blazing in the pot-bellied stove. Five men sat around it, the same group that had been there earlier. Hawkins was behind the counter, where two men stood. Each of the men held a tea cup. They were Lonnie Peel and Jim Higgins. Farns joined them, his rifle hanging low. He spoke to Hawkins.

"I thought I told you about being an accessory, Ben. This little trick of yours is going to cost you."

"They come back, Dave. They went through here just like I told you, but . . ."

"Well, that's just a lot of bull. They were here all the time. It was written all over your face!"

shoulder and grabbing for weapons. Their faces were frenzied, their mouths open to shout things he couldn't hear above the roar of the flames.

"Had yourself a real good time with her, didn't you, you bastard?" Stood around and watched each other . . .

He swung the rifle around by the barrel, like a bat. The heavy stock cracked first Peel and then Higgins and knocked them to the ground. As they tried to rise, Farns stood over them and hammered them down. The air was thick with smoke. The fire was everywhere. He beat them into unconsciousness, then turned quickly and ran out the door.

Hawkins stood there crying, his hands to his face. "I had that store my whole life." The building was an inferno, flames leaping up into the sky a hundred feet above it.

"I told you about being an accessory, Ben," Farns said. He turned and went back the way he'd come, pushing through the people of Hawkins' Counter who stood there silently watching the store burn.

It was close to midnight when Farns heard the rushing sound of the river in the area of the abandoned dam. It had been some 40 years ago that some industrial concern got the idea of harnessing the river to power its machinery. There had probably been a lot of excitement when the project got under way. There was still some rusted machinery there, and the remains of workers' homes and some concrete chunks from the uncompleted dam. These days, no one even knew for sure what company had started the work.

Farns had moved quickly after leaving Hawkins' Counter. Now at the dam, he began slowing up. He felt strange, peculiar. He'd killed four men outright, and he could clean a share of killing Sarah Callen. It had affected his nerves, his instincts, his bodily responses. He was seeing, hearing and smelling in a way he never had before.

He felt like a hunting cat, relaxed but purposeful, alert to everything about him in a way no human being could be. So it was that when an unpleasant smoldered his nostrils, he responded to it the way an animal would, knowing instinctively who and what it was — Styler.

He moved straight forward and heard that harsh New York voice. "Really thought you were going to get me back on that cheap-pawn set-up, didn't you?" Styler said. "A small-time cop like you and you thought you were getting 'Krag'

Kong" Styles back on the chain gang. Now, that was stupid of you. That was very stupid!" This was followed by a heavy snorting sound. Then there was a grunt of pain, obviously in Morrison's voice.

Moving closer, Farms saw a flashlight beam. Suddenly the light picked up a face, Morrison's face. It was pouring blood. The javelin leaped back against a huge slab of concrete Styles' fist, big around as a howling hell, smashed into him again. Morrison's head shot back and once more his grunt of pain reached Farms.

"The next one's in the gut, baby," Styles said. Now Farms could see him, a great bulky bear of a man.

"Whose gut, Styles?" Farms called out, stepping behind a tree.

"Who's got the job's that cut them?" Styles roared. His flashlight raked long beams through the trees.

Farms laughed and Styles fired off a shot. Then Farms put his rifle and his hand axe down, drew his knife and started forward, running low to the ground. The bulky proletarian leaped up above him, turning his head this way and that, apparently trying to figure out what was happening. Farms stared at him, got him across the belly, and kept going. Styles howled, fired wildly.

Farms laughed and rushed him again, stepping through the darkness like a shadow.

The giant went down, blood pouring out of him as though out of a broken jug. Farms moved over him, pulling his head up by the hair.

And then Morrison lumbered into him, pushing him weakly. "Christ, Dave, enough is enough!" he yelled. "I reckon you killed the others. I don't know how, but I know you did it. But enough is enough. Let's handle at least one of these things without the law."

Farms, caving, shrugging, dropped his knife. "All right, let's get the son of a bitch up on his feet. I ain't saying yes or no about the others. But all right, let's bring this one in." EDITOR'S NOTE: Bodily cut up though he was, Styles was brought back to Discoll and returned to the Vassarville Prison Farm.

The four revolutionaries who broke him out of Vassarville are also in prison in New York State. They were stopped by police there on their way back from Vassarville, and a search of their car disclosed a number of weapons and a quantity of heroin. All four are away on 10-year sentences.

As for Karen Roberts, whose rape triggered Farms' savage reprisal, she died of internal hemorrhaging before midnight.

TANK BREAKOUT FROM NORMANDY

Continued from page 63

Once Notre Dame was clear, Nelson set up strongpoints and outposts on all the roads leading into town. At nightfall, on July 27, five M-109s hammered the surprised Yanks with a preliminary strafing. Before the Americans could recover, Bradley's best tanks charging through the night, splitting the darkness with tracers and tracer fire.

In Notre Dame, Colonel Nelson bounded aboard his command tank and headed out to impede the road-blocks. A shell sparked his target to jerk, killing him instantly. Tanks and tank destroyers raced in all directions out of Notre Dame to square off with the oncoming Panzer columns, and the roar of exploding US armor soon degenerated all other din.

Von Kluge's retreating infantrymen had studded the ground west and south of Notre Dame with every kind of buried lethal obstacle, including anti-tank mines, Satch mines, Teller mines, mustard-gas canisters, and they had even hobby-knapped the hedgerows.

Those tanks that made it through

the minefields fought it out gun to gun in stabbing dusk, but the Germans had an additional advantage. Lurking in wait they had been able to pick targets in advance. The Americans could fire only at dashes in the dark.

By dawn on July 28 terrors creased General Collins' face, and in First Army Headquarters, Omar Bradley pointed the map table with his fist. The breakthrough threatened to bog down. The bridges across the Seine at Gavry, forming a funnel mouth through which the sweeping 84th Corps would have to pour, were still in German hands.

But in the battle zone itself, momentum still gripped the tank crews of the US armored divisions. No one there had time for despair.

The tanks at Villers-Bocage were still fighting for the strategic crossroads. Panzer elements had infiltrated their rear. Bayonet was still taking any chance on vastly illustrious American spearheads. If possible he'd lop them off.

Briefed of the danger by breathless runners from his outposts, General Maurice Rose, in command of CCA tanks at Villers-Bocage, pulled in his lines and braced himself for a siege. The Nazi armor closed in.

July 29, 1944 hours. American



"You dialed that number incorrectly, please try again, this is a recording . . ."



"Will you knock it off and give me a shot of penicillin?"

troops driving due south from Herbeau along the coast had captured Constance. The German 84th Corps was well and truly caught in the jaws of a gigantic nutcracker. But Von Kluge had finally given the signal for withdrawal and behind a huge shield of armor the entire force now moved south for Germany.

Midnight: GIs marching the coast north of St. Denis le Gast tested, sweating in the dark. From the north and west came the ominous clank and rumble of heavy armor...

Sergeant Hudson Whittington of Bogalusa, Louisiana, had just taken command of a 41st Armored Infantry platoon in place of its leader, missing in action. The first column of the massive panzer horde plus 2200 infantry shattered out of the Cotentin pocket and overwhelming Whittington's forward element and Sherman and halftracks scattered for safety.

Yelling after them, Whittington hopped to the back deck of one tank and pinned it back into action; he bawled firing instructions echoing down through the hatch. The Sherman's 75 roared, hurtled shells into the leading Mark VI and found a vulnerable spot that turned the Tiger into a smoking roadblock which triggered a massive traffic jam.

"Come on!" yelled Whittington.

The Shermans rolled, bulldozed left and right through the hedgerows and trundled off along both flanks of the three-mile column of tanks and armored mobile armor. Gunmen kicked the firing pedal until their feet ached. Vehicle after vehicle in the stalled column was plastered with 75s and machine gun slugs.

Whizzing antiaircraft smoke or

trotted alongside the tanks, and German crew survivors abandoning their burning vehicles flattered into bazooka fire, grenade bursts or fleching bayonets. Many of the Germans hustled out their own automatic pistols and knives. The glare of fires and pin flashes cast unholy illuminations on bloody hand-to-hand fighting around and between the dueling tanks.

By daybreak all highways between St. Denis le Gast and the Channel coast were choked with wrecks of disabled Tigers, Panthers, Jagdpanthers, halftracks, personnel carriers, self-propelled artillery, and piled-up tanks of dead General Tytman, commander of the 3rd Polish Grenadier Division, took a US shell in the chest and died on the threshold of his command post. Panzergrenadiers, infantry and tank crews stumbling west from the vast smoking graveyard of the 84th Corps, were cornered by a detachment of 105 mm howitzers and the American gunners slaughtered them ad nauseam.

By nightfall on July 30, General Omar Bradley could chalk up Operation Cobra as a success. The 84th Corps was decimated, its escape routes finally sealed. Von Kluge's one great effort to smash the Allies with his armor had failed.

The war had 10 more months to rage. But the doom of Hitler's Reich was certified the day General Cobras' tank crews trashed through the German lines below St. Lo if Hitler couldn't see it. Field Marshal Günther Von Kluge could. A couple of weeks after the Allied breakthrough he reached for his army pistol and shot himself in the head.

DARLING, WHAT BIG EARS YOU'LL HAVE . . .

Continued from page 17

A woman's age can be judged fairly accurately by studying her ears. The systematic examination of more than 40,000 female ears in the US and Canada has proved that the ear continues to grow until death.

After the age of 25 all ears assume an increasing largeness of contour. A beautiful and seductive woman whose first youth has departed may not show the fact in other ways, but her tell-tale ear will surely reveal the story of the flight of time.

Then there is the little wrinkle that comes just in front of each feminine ear during the thirties — a certain and unmistakable sign.

Near the top of each ear, just within the downturned edge and slightly towards the back, will be found, if one feels for it, a slight bump of cartilage. This is a remnant of what was originally the tip of the ear when, many centuries ago, the organ in our remote ancestors had a point on it. Most of the ages today have pointed ears, but in human beings the upper edge of the organ has, in time, become folded over so that it covers the real tip.

Further proof that ears aren't a girl's best friend is the fact that they play a part in making figure-conscious females hungry. Inside the ear there is a nerve which stimulates the stomach. A few centuries ago aldermen of the City of London discovered the trick of ribbing the skin behind their ears before going to a great banquet.

The ear hunger nerve is active and makes them ravenous enough to march away through courses after course of a marathon feast. Since then, the nerve has been called "The alderman's nerve," but all females have it too.

On the average the hearing of women is more acute than that of men. A husband who stays outside and thinks of typewriting systems in the food belief that his bald partner won't hear him shouldn't chance it. The odds are, distinctly, that the little woman will be tuned in to every ray sound he makes, even though she may be sound asleep at first.

Not only do women hear better than men, but their hearing deteriorates less as they get older. However, when a woman's hearing does start to fail — and everybody's does with age — the deterioration is twice as rapid as a man's.

The size and shape of human ears are hereditary. Each type of ear, so

to speak, as handed down with comparatively little change from one generation to the next. If a chick has hairy ears, however — that is with black hair growing from their outer edges — the odds are that some members of her family tree (perhaps counting back) came from the Mediterranean Sea region.

More women than ever are having their ears pierced these days because of a boom in the fashion for dangling earrings. If a woman wanted to adorn her ears as in the Stone Age, her husband or boy friend crudely poked her lobes and plugged them with pieces of disjointed bone. This was supposed to stop evil spirits from entering her body.

Stone Age chicks passed their ears in a more skilful manner, using a nail, a hammer, and a piece of wood behind the lobes. Metal objects shaped like hammers were then hung from them, much to the frustration of loves who knew that our lobes are sensitive zones and wanted to nibble on them.

During the time of the Roman Occupation, the warlike Romans and Anglo-Saxon women had pierced ear lobes, and habitually wore ear-rings even in battle. But after the 10th century they declined in popularity.

For 300 years afterwards, the ear was considered ugly stuff, until a new interest in fine clothes and jewellery arose during the Renaissance. Queen Elizabeth I and Sir Walter Raleigh both wore double pearl-shaped pearls attached to their ear lobes. Pearl ear-rings stayed popular with men and women until the reign of Charles I.

Most men stopped wearing ear-rings in the 18th century, but today some men have at least one lobe pierced for a single earring. Many commercial fisheries still believe that piercing one ear and putting in a "sleeper" or gold earring, improves their eyesight. And in the days of sailing ships nearly all seamen wore large ear-rings because they believed that if a man fell overboard his particular patron saint would hook a line on one of the rings and pull him to safety.

Pierced ears also have a distinct sexual connotation. They used to be the trademark of African virgins looking for husbands, and of French whores looking for clients. Today they're all the rage again.

But stranger things than this to age and sexuality are found in female ears. One 17-year-old girl complained of severe pain in her head recently. Inside her ear — and sprouting hirsitly — was a bean.

THE OYSTER PIRATES

Continued from page 29

Barton was feeding the chief whisky. Every night they would hold a party in the chief's hut.

The hold was almost full now. I figured we had about \$10,000 worth of oysters. Not a bad haul for a few weeks' work. I was happy about the deal. My share would put me well in front.

Then the refrigeration unit broke down. I writhed with despair as Barton struggled to repair it. The thermometer kept rising and I thought of all those oysters in the hold. A few more degrees and they would start to rot.

Smythe was sympathetic. "Never mind, boss. That's the way it goes sometimes."

"Yeah," I groaned. "All we'll have is a cargo of rotten oysters. It'll make a nice old stink, on top of everything else."

Barton worked grimly, his pale face streaked with sweat and grease. At last he got the motor going again and the temperature in the hold started to drop. I breathed a sigh of relief.

"It won't last," he grunted. "I've done a makeshift job. I'll have to get those bloody boozers really working now."

I grinned. "Let's pull out right now," I said. "We've got enough oysters."

"The hell we have!" Barton scoffed. "I want a full load."

Barton was drinking heavily. I noticed his frequent trips into the jungle and I guessed he had a bottle of whisky hidden in some cool spot. I floated him about it.

"You want to lay off the booze,"

I said. "You're treating these natives too rough."

He glared at me.

"Go to hell, Doyle!" he snarled. "I'll do what I like! It's all my money involved here. You only supply the boat."

"It's your old man's money you're playing with," I bit out.

"Don't you worry about whose money it is. Just remember you cut a 50 percent of the profits."

"You're an impossible bastard, Barton."

I went back on board Bannardis and checked the temperature in the hold. It was okay. The oysters were still frozen, but now I knew that the refrigeration unit was likely to break down at any time, I didn't feel so happy about them.

Suddenly there was a scuffling up on deck. Shouts of anger, the thud of a falling body.

I raced up on deck, and stopped short with surprise and shock.

Barton stood there with a bottle of whisky in his hand. Smythe lay on his back, his dark eyes glazed.

"I caught the black bastard throwing my whisky!" Barton ground out. "Look!"

He waved the bottle at me. It was three-quarters full. The top was off and whisky had run down Barton's arm. The fumes were overpowering.

I ran across to Smythe. He was unconscious. I got some water from the galley and threw it in his face. He didn't respond.

I looked at Barton. "He's got concussion," I said harshly. "You hit him with that bottle too hard."

"He pinched my whisky!" Barton shouted.

"To hell with your bloody whisky!" I shouted back. "What about Smythe here? He's got to live

current events



"Police in Blackpool, England, this week arrested Albert Chapman and charged him with the gas murder of his wife, Maudie . . ."



"But it's off a minnow! I just ran into an old friend and shouted 'Hi, Jack!'"

medical attention?"

"We can't leave you!"

"We're going to leave!"

I stood face to face with Barton, determined. I knew this was the showdown. It had to come sooner or later. I had learned to hate the bastard now.

Barton raised the bottle and I tensed, ready for action. Suddenly, Smoky groaned.

Barton looked down at him and lowered the bottle. I dropped on to one knee and shook Smoky gently. Light flickered into his eyes.

"How are you, mate?" I asked.

"All right," Smoky groaned. "All right."

"How's your head?"

"Jesus! My bloody head! It's on fire!"

"Barton hit you with a bottle."

Smoky groaned again and looked up at Barton. "You're a mean bastard, aren't you? I had only two rounds out of your heavy bottle."

Barton snorted. I helped Smoky down to his bunk. Barton followed, his lips curling.

"Do you need a doctor, mate?" I asked Smoky.

"No," Smoky replied. He groaned painfully. "All the medicine I need is

in that bottle."

I looked at Barton savagely. He had lit a sigar, his pale features tight, clutching the bottle. Then he decided to play it cool.

"What's one bottle of whisky?" he growled. "Here ya're. Give it to him."

I took the bottle and handed it to Smoky. "Stay in your bunk for a couple of days, mate, and you'll be all right."

"Yeah," Smoky said.

Another morning passed and I was still worried about the refrigerated hold. The motor had broken down again, but Barton managed to get it back into action.

I made up my mind. We had to leave this salvo now; I rowed the dinghy towards the shore. I would find Barton and have it out with him.

A native ran up to me as I tied the dinghy to a mangrove.

"Nasua! Nasua!" he cried, pointed towards the jungle.

"What is it?" I asked.

The native could not speak pidgin. He waved frantically, eyes rolling.

There was something very wrong. I had found out that it takes a lot to upset three easy-going people. I

picked up my rifle from the dinghy and walked towards the jungle.

It was cool under the banana leaves. Barton draped the trees and there was a musky smell from the rotting vegetation underfoot. I pushed forward along a little-used track, rifle at the ready.

Ten hundred yards inland I came to a small clearing alongside a narrow river. Water sparkled and glittered in the sunlight. I saw Barton there.

He was standing by the river bank, holding one of the young native women. I recognized her. She was the prettiest of all, and her name was Triki. She wore nothing but a grass skirt and her firm young breasts puffed seductively.

She struggled against Barton's probing hand, but Barton was too strong. He tried to force her down on to the grassy bank.

Suddenly there was movement in the jungle to my left. The head man's son, the young native Barton had threatened earlier, walked out into the open carrying a three-pronged fishing spear. His face twisted with hatred as he saw Barton holding the girl. His arm drew back ready to throw the spear.

I shouted a warning, raised my rifle.

Barton spun around, his fist on the gun and grabbed for his pistol. The girl screamed, clawed at him frantically, her black skin glistening with sweat.

Barton backhanded her across the mouth. She fell back splashing into the water. Barton pulled out his pistol and aimed it at me.

Then I saw something which sent a shudder through me. A long, black object rose from the river depths and moved swiftly towards the bumbling girl. The crocodile opened its grey jaws, showing rows of jagged teeth.

Barton had not seen the native boy yet. He concentrated on me. I had to make a quick decision then stop Barton, stop the native, or stop the crocodile.

I jumped sideways. Barton's bullet zapped past my head. I stuck my decision. I fired at the roaring crocodile.

The three-pronged spear struck Barton full in the chest. He staggered back, mouth gaping, a choked scream on his lips.

The crocodile kept high as my rifle bullet ripped into the front of its skull. I fired again and again. It twisted and writhed, its long tail thrashing the water.

I ran forward to help Triki, but she had scrambled up the river bank. Her black eyes were wide with fear. She stood there, shaking all over. The

boy walked forward, took her arm and comforted her.

I looked at Barton. The spear stuck out of his chest at a grotesque angle. His face was pale to death. The dead man's son walked over to me and stared down at the dead man, his face expressionless.

"Moss is good," he said.

He pulled the spear from the corpse and led Triti back onto the path.

* * *

We buried Barton on Tarki Island and Roromaha headed back across the Coral Sea towards Townsville. The refrigeration motor kept breaking down, but each time I'd think how I got it going again.

We eventually made it. The Department of Fisheries got suspicious and asked me a lot of awkward questions, but the big oysters were a sensation on the Sydney market.

The police accepted my story that Barton had been speared by an unknown native. The case was referred back to Bougainville, but nothing came of it.

I never returned to Tarki Island.

THE SPY WHO KNEW TOO MUCH

Continued from page 22

"That would be Terry Sanders. He's an American."

"The girl friend, Marjorie, says you know something about Major Gregory Sabo."

"Well, Major Sabo taught at the University for a good many years. We were close friends, and he told me about some of his experiences."

"I thought that you think he might be in danger?"

"He told me that once, years ago, he and there were things in his past life that could cost him his life."

"Did Sabo ever marry her?"

"No," she answered, and looked away.

"He had no family in England, either. No one close. It's strange."

"Some men are like that."

"What did he teach here?"

"Languages — English, French, German. He was very good."

Rand stared at the sky. "The memos are finished — he delivered the manuscript to his agent last night. Do you fear for both their lives?"

She suddenly turned on him. "Just why did the British send you here, Mr. Rand?"

He couldn't answer that, and he didn't bother to try. "We'll talk again. Thank you, Miss Morton."

He left her there and took a taxi across town to Browder's office on King Street East. It was only a 10-minute ride, but he reached the building with a growing sense of apprehension. Marjorie Fleming wasn't at her desk in the outer office, and Rand glanced quickly to Browder's door. The library agent was at his desk, head bent over Major Sabo's manuscript. A closed volume of *memos* by a Scotland Yard inspector lay at his elbow.

"Hello, Rand. I've just been reading over the book. It's quite interesting."

"So I gathered. I wonder if I could read it myself."

Browder hesitated and closed the folder containing the manuscript. "That wouldn't be quite ethical at this stage of things. His publisher hasn't seen it yet."

"A woman told me this morning that your life might be in danger because of it."

The little agent checked. "Who'd tell you a thing like that?"

"Her name is Iris Morton. She teaches at the University."

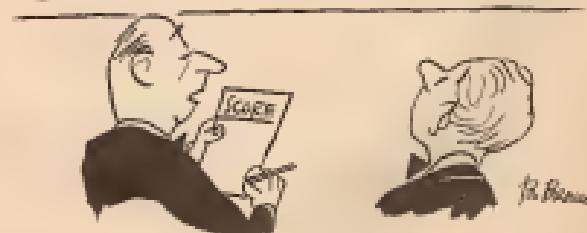
Browder nodded. "I've heard of her. She's something of a doyenne to the hippies and American drift dodgers. The police speculated her case about helping them smuggle marijuana across the border."

He frowned and opened the manuscript once more, flipping over the pages until he found what he sought. "I thought so! Iris speaks of a woman named Iris here. He met her soon after he came to Toronto. There's no last name, but she taught at the University with him. She was his mistress for several years."

Rand stared out the window at the sky. "I don't think she'll be happy about that chapter."

On her way out Rand saw that Marjorie Fleming was back at her desk. She was writing something on a piece of newspaper, and he caught a glimpse of it before she hurriedly

MISS UNIVERSE



"This is truly a Miss Universe contest."



"Helen, the car keys?"

coated. It. N.B. August Bear, the note read. He wondered if N.B. stood for Norman Browder, and what his connection was with August Bear.

"Anything I can do for you, Mr. Rand?"

"No. I just wanted to tell you that I saw Iris Mountain this morning. I'd like to see her again, and you too."

Marjorie Manning hesitated, glancing again at the note she was covering with her hand. She seemed anxious to have him know "There's a meeting tonight of American students living in Toronto. Iris Mountain is going to speak at it. Meet me at the corner of Yonge and Bloor at eight o'clock and I'll take you along."

"It's a date," he told her.

She was smiling as he left, but it was a forced smile. She hadn't wanted him to see that note, and that was enough to make her curious about N.B. August Bear.

Everyone was waiting for him at

TO ADAM, March, 1973

nights it's like this, with half the audience turned on," she said. It didn't seem to bother her.

After a moment Iris Mountain appeared, dressed in a neatly tailored summer suit. She stopped to chat with a few of the young people and finally made her way to the low platform at the front of the room. Rand had to admit that her talk was good. She spoke informally of peace and love and freedom, enlivening her audience with every sentence. When it was over they applauded warmly, and clustered around her as sandwiches and pitchers of beer were brought out for refreshments.

"They're hungry," Rand commented to Marjorie.

"Smoking pot gives them an appetite." She waved to an approaching young man and motioned him over. "This is Terry, Mr. Rand."

He was a clean-cut youth with surprisingly short hair. Rand shook his hand and said, "From what I'd heard I was expecting more hair."

Terry grimaced boyishly. "It's for crossing the border. The customs guy gets upright at long hair and start searching for pot right away."

"Do they find any?"

"Not on me. I'm clean."

"Then why bother to cut your hair short?" Rand asked logically.

The boyish eyes hardened with suspicion. "You a cop?"

"No."

"He's all right," Iris Mountain said, coming up to join them. "He's just British."

Terry relaxed a bit, and after a moment Marjorie led him away to the refreshments. "He's the one who's upright," Rand observed.

Iris smiled. "You made him nervous. He's been running pot across the border for months, maybe some of the hash stuff too. I understand he's a big shipment to go over next month and doesn't know how to get it across. The customs men are wise to most of the tricks by now."

"You encourage these activities?"

"Of course not, Mr. Rand! And happily most American youths here don't engage in them. But if I want to keep their friendship, to talk to them the way I did this evening, I can hardly report them."

Rand glanced around, making sure no one could overhear them. "I was talking with Browder about the book. You didn't tell me you'd been Saber's matrix."

Her face went white. "Who and I was?"

"Saber wrote about it."

"That swine!"

"You should have told me. It explains your interest in Subic and his past."

"We were both so much younger then."

"Everyone was younger then."

"He used to sing to me — German songs that he'd learned from war prisoners. You know he was a front-line intelligence officer before he was wounded."

Rand added, "I know. Tell me something. You knew Subic well for a good many years. Do you think he really has fears about his past life? Do you think those fears would be great enough for him to leave some parts out of his book?"

"If he wrote about me I think he'd write about anything."

"That's what I think too," Rand told her. "I believe I'll talk to Browder again and try to get a look at that manuscript."

"Are you the one he fears, Rand? The man from his past?"

"No. I'm not from anybody's past."

He left the meeting hall and headed back to his hotel. Browder's home phone was listed in the local telephone directory, and Rand tried that number first. No one answered the ring, and he called the office next. Browder answered on the second ring.

"This is Rand. About Subic's manuscript..."

"Yes?" Browder's voice was tight with something like fear.

"I must have a look at it."

"Rand, there's something in the manuscript that could be very dangerous. It's—." There was a pause.

"What?" Browder, what is it?"

Browder's voice had broken off in mid-sentence. There was a pause, and then a scream. "My God!" the agent shouted into the phone. "Hold her!"

Then there was a loud crack that could only have been a gunshot. In another second the connection was broken. Rand grabbed the flat 380 automatic from his suitcase and headed for the door.

* * *

When Rand reached the office the hotel door was standing open. Browder was crumpled behind his desk, shot once through the forehead. The manuscript was gone. Rand searched quickly, but it was nowhere to be found. He sighed and left the office exactly as it was, careful not to touch anything with his bare fingers.

He went downstairs to a pay phone and tried to call his old Mervyns at their home. Neither

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answered. It was nearly an hour since he'd left them at the meeting. Either one could have got there in time to kill Browder.

He called Major Subac's apartment next. The phone rang for several moments before a timid voice answered. "Major, this is Rand. Somebody killed Browder tonight and stole your manuscript. Do you have a carbon copy?"

"What? Yes, of course. But who would kill him? Why?"

"Someone who doesn't want your book published. Someone who might come after the carbon copy. Look, I'll be right over. Don't let anyone in till I get there — not even an old girl friend."

"Rand?"

"Yes."

"How do I know you didn't kill Browder and take the manuscript?"

"That's a chance you'll have to take, Major." Rand hung up.

It was after 11 by the time he reached Subac's two-front apartment. The white-haired man answered on the first ring, already frightened. "I can't believe it about Browder," he said.

"Where did you mention all your book? Major? Any women besides me? Anyone who would kill to prevent its publication?"

"I mentioned women, of course. But I can't believe any of them would kill over it."

"Then it must be the Chamber after it gets down to that."

The old eyes were watching him. "I told you it's barely mentioned."

"Under the circumstances I can't believe you, Major. Browder found something in that manuscript of yours that greatly upset him. And probably caused his death."

"But who?"

"I was talking to Browder when he was shot. His last words were

"Hold her." That not only implies that his killer was a woman, but also that a third person was with them in the office."

"You think it was Ira Montini?"

"She seemed upset that you'd write about your relationship. But there's another possibility. His secretary, Marjorie Fleming, was intent on making me believe Browder's life was in danger. That might have been a cover for her own plans. She was writing an odd note that night that puzzled me. It just simply *NB August 20th. More anything to you?"*

Major Subac thought about it. "N.B. is Norman Browder?"

"I assume so."

"You think it's a code of some sort?"

Rand shrugged. "Doubtful, but she did want to look at Anyway, let's take a look at your copy of the manuscript."

"Certainly." Major Subac was just starting toward the bedroom when he heard a noise. "Someone's in there," he whispered to Rand.

Tagging his automatic from beneath his jacket, Rand sprinted for the bedroom. He was just in time to see a figure stumble through the glass doors that led to a ground-floor patio. "Stop!" he called out, then ran after the shadowy intruder. He could see it was a man now, carrying what looked like the copy of Subac's manuscript.

"Hold it!" Rand shouted. "I have a gun!"

The figure hesitated, started to turn, and Rand was on top of him. "I'm not armed!" the other gasped. "Don't shoot!" It was the voice of Marjorie's American friend, Terry Sandoval.

Rand took the manuscript and ran his hands over the youth. He was unarmed. "You're in deep trouble," he said.

"Give me a break, Rand!" He tried to pull away, but Rand's grip was firm.

"Inside, come on!" Rand ordered.

Major Subac stood at the open glass door, a Luger in his hand. "Who is it?" he asked.

"His name's Terry. His gal friend was Browder's secretary." Subac lowered the gun but kept it in his hand, and Rand asked, "How about it, Terry? Ready to talk?"

The youth stared at the floor. "I don't know anything," he mumbled.

"He came for the carbon copy of the manuscript," Subac decided. "He and the girl must have killed Browder."

"I didn't kill anyone!" Terry insisted. "We just heard about



Browder on the radio?"

"Then who sent you for the manuscript?"

He bit his lower lip. "It's Notman. She wanted it."

"I see."

"When she heard Browder was dead she was afraid someone would go after the carbon copy. She wanted to get it fast. She asked me to steal it from Major Sobe because he wrote things to it about the two of them."

"I'll buy that explanation for the moment," Rand said.

"You believe him?" Sobe asked incredulously.

"I believe him," Rand turned on the youth. "But what about N.R. Alvaro Bay?"

"What?"

"It was a note that Marjorie wrote. What does it mean?"

The young man flushed. "N.B. is New Brunswick. You can hunt bear in New Brunswick in the summer, and I'm going up there with some other guys in August. I asked her to check the hunting regulations for me."

"So you've taken up hunting?"

"Yes, I guess so," Terry mumbled. "With a short harvest."

"I...!"

"And the customs people won't even look twice when you cross the border with a dead bear on the car. If I remember my geography, New Brunswick borders on Maine, a perfect place to cross over with a dead bear stuffed with margarine."

"How did you—?"

Rand smiled. "Just putting things together. Marjorie had to have some reason for hiding that note, and this told me you had a shipment to go across the border. My only mistake was in thinking the N.B. talked it with Norman Browder."

"Then that should prove I didn't kill him. I hardly knew the man!"

"We'll see," Rand said. He picked up the manuscript and began leafing through it, looking for the passage about Chamberlain. The manuscript was neatly typed, with the characters black and sharp against the page. Something flashed in Rand's mind, and then all at once it hit him. He knew the whole thing.

"This isn't a carbon copy," he said quietly. "It's the original manuscript."

The Luger in Major Sobe's hand trembled and pointed at him. "Yes, Mr. Rand, that's correct. It's the original, and that means I killed Norman Browder to get it back."

Rand nodded. "It means something else, too. It means that the real Major Sobe has been dead for 25 years, and that you are General Harts

Holder, late of the German army."

The white-haired man barely moved a muscle. "You suddenly know a great deal," he said.

"Once I saw that was the original manuscript, the rest of it just fell into place. Even allowing for 25 years, you look nothing like the picture of Major Sobe in my office."

"Even your eyes are different. You can't here and taught German at the University. That in itself proves nothing, but you also used to sing German songs to him — songs you claimed to have learned from war prisoners."

"But the real Major Sobe served only in Burma and London. He would have had no front-line contact with German prisoners, and no opportunity to learn their songs and their language as well."

"There was also the little quiz you gave me yesterday. The questions were all German-oriented, the sort of facts a high-ranking German officer would have known. And Browder's dying word was Holder, not Hold her. He died with your name on his lips, General."

The Luger moved between Rand and Terry. "Holder died in that plane crash. He was shot down by the British."

"I believe he survived, General."



"What time do you have?"

The real Major Sobe heard rumors of a survivor and went to investigate, thinking it might be Chamberlain. But the Frenchman was dead. You were the survivor, General. The war had just ended, and people like you were being arrested for the war crimes trials. You needed a way out of Germany.

"I think you killed Sobe and took his identity. It was dangerous, but it was your only way out. Of course you couldn't return to London where Sobe was known, so you changed his intelligence job and moved to Canada to start a new life."

"If that were true, why would I attempt to write Sobe's memoirs?"

"That was your fatal mistake, of course. But when the American publisher approached you with the deal it seemed just too good to turn down. You had stories from teaching and you needed the money. Besides, after 25 years you had almost become Sobe anyway."

"You know the publisher was mainly interested in the Chamberlain incident, and I imagine you filled out the rest of the book with transplanted memories of your own youth, plus the true story of your life in Canada. But you had to write something about the London years —

the part you know least well. I think this is where you tripped up.

"When I visited Browder at his office he had a volume of Scotland Yard memoirs on the desk next to your manuscript. I think you lifted certain incidents from other books of memoirs, and from books on cryptography.

"Unfortunately, Browder recognized some as plagiarisms — he was probably checking one of them with the Scotland Yard book. That was what he meant by the manuscript being dangerous. It was dangerous to you, General, because it suggested you weren't Sabo."

"And once he knew that, he followed the same reasoning I did to deduce you were really Holder. When he accused you of this, you had to kill him and take back the manuscript. All this time, it wasn't Major Sabo who forced the past. It was General Holder."

The white-haired man nodded slowly. "You are too smart for your own good, Mr. Reed. But 25 years is

too long a time to go down the drain now. It may be too late to try me for war crimes, but there's still the murder of Major Sabo. And I have a life here I don't want to lose." He shifted the gun slightly. "I think it can be made to appear that you two killed each other."

He was just raising the gun when Terry leaped. Holder turned and fled, and then Reed's own gun was out again, and he squeezed the trigger. Holder gasped and went down hard, hitting the wall with his blood.

"Are you hit?" Reed asked the youth.

"Just grazed me. But I thank you killed him."

Reed put away the gun and walked to the telephone. He knew the outcome would be pleasing to London, but somehow it wasn't pleasing to him. He'd ended up being the man whom Holder-Sabo had forced after all — the assassin from across the sea.

THE TIME OF THE CATFISH

Continued from page 24

The death toll was 60,000, with hundreds of thousands of others maimed, buried, and driven out of their minds by the endless convulsions of the tortured earth.

The greatest single tragedy occurred at a Tokyo Army clothing depot, where, in an open space of something like 16 acres, more than 30,000 people were quite literally roasted to death by huge firewalls that came sweeping over them from the burning city.

Now, on the exact spot of this holocaust, a shrine and a museum has been erected called the Earthquake Memorial Hall. The ground plan of the building is that of a Christian cross, the cross crowned by a Buddhist pagoda, with Shinto motifs all around the pagoda. The building is intended to symbolize the fact that people of all races and creeds suffered in the appalling disaster.

Inside the building, row upon row of earthenware crocks and wooden boxes preserve the bones of 50,000 victims. A 20-volume record lists the names of all who perished in Tokyo.

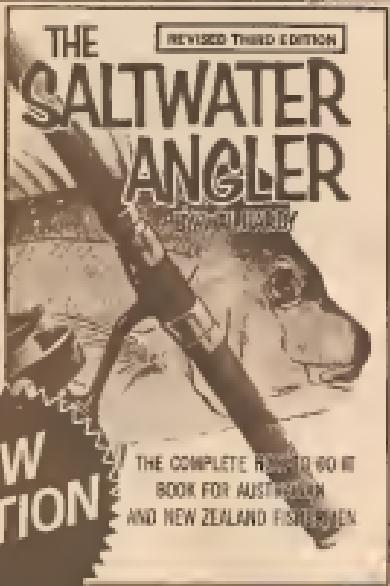
During the Great Kanto Earthquake, shocking, almost unbelievable details filtered out of the country and into the world press, being relayed to the tune of millions of pounds and dollars.

Full publicity was the policy then, as it is now, but the Japanese War Cabinet deemed it unsafe to publicize the earthquake and tidal waves that struck the Nagoya Prefecture in 1944, when the country was at war. Only scant and often misleading news ever found its way through to the outside world.

Japan struck again at 4:20 in the morning in December 1946, this time at Osaka. Reports received at that city painted a picture almost equal to the Great Kanto Earthquake.

Kishiwada and Shima, with populations of better than 30,000, had been wiped out, mostly by fire. Kawan had been completely inundated with waist-high mud, and a 10-foot tidal wave had left a horrific path of destruction and death. A freight train had disappeared altogether and was never seen again. Thousands of fishing vessels had been swept out to sea, and tens of thousands of refugees flooded the roads.

In the Wakayama Prefecture, even the hills were not enough to stop the tidal waves, which struck five times in succession. Shinsobaura, a small



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village of some 60 houses on the other side of the hills from Tarshe, was simply one huge stretch of water.

Witnesses to the disaster in Tomioka swore that they had seen a strange light far out at sea a few minutes before the earthquake and the tidal wave. Close to 250,000 people lost their homes in the area.

The outskirts of Kansas looked as though some huge monster from out of mythology and nightmares had been playing fiendish pranks upon the land. Roots and segments of walls were found in the middle of paddy fields miles from their original foundations, buried there by the tidal waves. A coastal vessel weighing over 160 tons was lifted on top of a house.

But of the 1946 earthquake was the most widespread experienced in modern times, the next, in 1948, was a more concentrated and terrible one. It struck Fukui at 5:14 pm on June 29, 1948.

Eyewitnesses fortunate enough to be on the nearby hills here described how the entire city of both solid buildings and flimsy bamboo dwellings seemed to rise tip into the air, spin around several times, and then collapse in a gigantic heap of flames and smoke.

Although the shocks lasted for only a few seconds, they spell doom for the city's 80,000 inhabitants in Fukur's Tokyo. Theatre alone nearly 1000 persons died when the building collapsed.

One of the heroes of the tragedy was Take Saito, a primary school teacher. Trapped by one arm under a burning building, he calmly hacked off his own arm with an axe and successfully escaped.

Stories were told of the ground splitting open to form bottomless crevices up to 30 feet across, into which people were seen to fall. Then the shuddering earth closed itself over them.

The full extent of the Nagoya earthquake of 1946 will probably never be known, thanks to the curtain of secrecy imposed during those war years. But according to Europeans living in Japan at the time, it did more damage to Japan's war industries, concentrated in that area, than all the Allied bombings — including the atom-bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

With this sort of record, the sort of pattern slowly but relentlessly building, for just how long will Nippon continue to exist? How long before the islands crack and sink beneath the sea, as did Atlantis? Japanese scientists are working hard on solving the question.

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PLATE 1

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THE BLIND MAN AND THE BLACKMAILER

Continued from page 28

"So let us assume that the murderer called by appointment. What business would a man usually have with a blackmailer — particularly a man, or man, in the positions of the two Americans?"

"They'd be anxious to pay up and take possession of the negatives and prints," the inspector said.

"Precisely. I believe Piggot went to the boarding house to pay the money Tyler was demanding for the pictures. Probably he entered the boarding house unnoticed by any of the other residents — Donald said there were all sorts of people staying in and out. He found Tyler's room and offered to pay the blackmail money. Tyler would have already taken out the photographs Piggot was interested in, relocked and hidden the强盗密室 and put the key away again.

"But something went wrong with the transaction. Perhaps at the last moment Tyler decided to renege the price, or perhaps he was going to hold on to the negatives. You'll have to find out from Piggot. Anyhow, there was a fight that ended in Tyler's death, and Piggot took the negatives and prints of himself and his friend from Tyler's body. Now, according to the police doctor, death occurred about eight o'clock, half an hour before Mr. James visited Tyler's room, and I have no doubt the doctor is correct. Piggot wanted, because he knew he had to leave the boarding house without being seen.

"Then, about 8:30, just as he was about to leave the room, you, Mr. James, came in the front door. He stepped back inside Tyler's room to wait until you had gone past. But unfortunately for him you knocked on the door, which fell slightly open, and asked to come in. Piggot saw that if you came in you would trip over Tyler's body."

"Then Piggot had an inspiration. He picked up the body and propped it up in the armchair in a坐姿 sitting position. You were guided by Piggot's voice, which you took to be the voice of the new boarder, and you walked towards the chair. But because Piggot was standing behind the chair you walked too far and bumped into Tyler's knees and feet."

"Then you asked if you might feel Tyler's face. That must have been a nasty surprise for Piggot, but he reached out, took your hand and guided it straight to Tyler's face. He even gave the head a slight turn so that you wouldn't question whether or not Tyler was alive."

"But why did Piggot and his friend have to kill the girl?" Donald asked.

"They had to kill her before she learned that Tyler had been murdered. Piggot knew that once the police had taken possession of the photos they would track her down to get the addresses of the three men. Piggot and his friend knew she'd realize that two of the negatives and sets of prints were missing from the strong box, and would conclude that one of the men in the missing photos was probably responsible for Tyler's death. Of course she'd tell this to the police, so Piggot and his friend had to kill her first."

"There was an awful lot of guesswork in all of that, Mr. Hodgkins," said Inspector O'Hare.

"That's true, Inspector," Hodgkins admitted. "I never pretended it was anything else. The crucial test, of course, was whether or not Mr. James, when he heard Piggot's voice, assumed it was Tyler speaking."

"I was quite sure it was Tyler," said James. "I could scarcely believe my ears."

Donald added, "And Piggot's reaction when he saw Mr. James was a dead give-away. He went as white as a sheet."

Hane came in from the kitchen carrying a tray laden with cups of tea, and Inspector O'Hare cleared a space in front of him on the table. "I wasn't absolutely positive we were on the right track, either, until I saw Piggot's face," he admitted.

"I never find it necessary to be absolutely positive about anything," said Hodgkins pedantically.

O'Hare replied, stroking his chin. "It's different in police work, Mr. Hodgkins. We can't afford to go off half-cocked."

Hodgkins sighed. "Yes, I'd noted."

"I'm not sure, Inspector," said Hane, "but I think you just missed a lesson on grammar."



VENGEANCE VIGIL

Continued from page 44

"How would a goat get to Bulpine Meadows?" Mal inquired.

"Full of lead," snapped old Moss. "But if you're plumb set on it, you can go back to them two cottonwoods with the beeches between and on up over the ridge. That will fetch you down into a shallow draw where there's a trail ledger off to the southwest."

"The trail Mary Randall was rolling?" shot through Mal's mind.

"That trail," went on the older, "will fetch you 15 miles up through the hills back into Bulpine Meadow. But you won't know it — you'll be cold meat."

Mal plucked his hat off the floor and slid warily to his feet. "I'll take me a gander up thataway," he said.

"You'll find your cowhand in the barn," grumbled old Moss. "I'll eat my buck'ry leg. See you in hell!"

When Mal stepped down from the veranda, he saw that the bunkhouse was dark. But a dim light shone from the open doorway of the barn. He crossed the moonlit yard warily, hand close to gun belt. Just outside the barn door and to one side, he hesitated and peered in through narrowed eyes. The light came from a smoking lantern hanging from a beam by a wire. Mal realized that once he stepped into that doorway, he would be a perfect target, from both inside and out.

But danger of no danger, the ratty outlaw hunter concluded he couldn't stand there all night. Perhaps, after all, Pooch was on the level. Maybe he had left the light just for convenience, then hit the hay. Mal stepped warily through the doorway.

Something that felt like a sledgehammer on a spear crashed against the side of his head. His brain reeled, fire blazed behind his eyeballs. He fought to get his gun free, but his leaden fingers refused to close on the walnut grips. As he lurched around in falling, his glazed eyes caught a blurred glimpse of the malignant face of the giant Pooch, lying stretched on a beam above the doorway. His hairy hand gripped an iron handle, clutched for another blow.

Ward figures were spinning in Mal's tortured brain. But out of them all escaped two. One was Little Jeff McLeod. The other — a gaunt, gaunt figure topped by high-piled copper hair, and with a small, boneface that seemed all hard eyes. A voice deep within whispered that no matter what the setup was, little

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Mary Randall was riding on the brink of hell.

Another thought piled on that one, Mal himself, and he only, could save Mary. Then his hopes went out.

He regained his senses in a swirl of pain. He was dimly conscious of a painful sensation that sent shivers of agony from his head to his toes. Then he found he was lashed to the saddle of a pony that was climbing up a steep mountain trail. The spicy odor of cedar and fir was heavy in his nostrils.

The thoughts flew to Mary Randall, wondering if she was safe. Then he thought over again of Little Jeff McLeod, and the rage of vengeance boiled in his veins. He wondered if he himself was to be killed with a slug in the back, as loyal Little Jeff had been. But his thoughts were crushed by the stopping of his horse.

The rope was cut between his hands and feet and he was dragged head-first on hard ground. He rolled over and tried to sit up, but fell from exhaustion. From where he lay he saw a blanket jerked from the mouth of the cave, letting out a flood of yellow light that played over the sandy features of Grizzly Posseck towering nearby.

Four men came darting from the cave. In a moment Mal found himself lying stretched inside, with everybody gazing down at him, his calmly surveyed the circle.

One of the outlaws was a big bucktoothed renegade with a black patch where his left eye should have been. Another was a gauntling bear-pole of a man with a fixed crafty look. Farther away stood a fellow younger with rutless hands and heavy boots-addled eyes. But it was the leader, called by the others "Cuchillo," who caught Archer's attention.

He was an unshamed little wretch with execrable spit eyes, as bold as a doorknob. The left corner of his mouth was twisted in a permanent grin. When he spoke, it sounded like the screeching of a skilet with sand. He pointed toward the torn flesh and clotted blood on the side of the prisoner's head and face.

"You mighty near overplayed your hand, Grizzly," he rasped. "I want this palaces kept alive. Soon as we get back from making this raid on old Goodnight's herd tonight, I aim to make this political writer a letter to Santa Fe telling his boss everything's known. Once a week he can do that. That way, the cockyed Association won't be sending a man down here every so often to be gut-shot like I done that Jeff McLeod."

Mal Archer felt hot blood go seeping to his throbbing head. A picture of his murdered middle-mane flitted across his memory. And there, not 10 feet distant, stood the wounded little rat who had planted the slug in Little Jeff's back. Cold rage stoked him. His steely grey eyes stalked like dagger points at the spit eyes of the grinning little outlaws.

"You dirty little yellow-bellied trash-whacker," he said distinctly. "You've well earned — 'Capitolo' — the knife, I will tell you, if it's the last job I do on earth!"

The devil called "Cuchillo" bared shining yellow teeth in a savage snarl. "You got good guts, lawman," he rasped. "But I been killing your kind so long it ain't even a choice." He swung around.

"Posseck," he sneered. "Did you shove them bones of Goodnight's over toward Crazy Man Creek, like I said, where they'll be easy to get at?"

"Shove 'em high, law," growled Grizzly, "and drift them this way."

"We got to get a move on," implored Cuchillo. He motioned to the others. "You there, Randall and Patch, tie that polecat up as he can't wriggle. We got nobody to spare to stay and guard him. I'll be ready in five minutes. You be ready to move!"

The surly little leader dashed outside, followed by Posseck and the brutes.

"Sleep-o!" thought Mal. "The young boozie-hound is Lusty Randall — Mary's bad brother." He noticed the ruffian youngster avoided his eyes.

The two made fast the lashings on Mal's ankles and wrists and stretched him out between opposite banks. He lay flat on his back; his long body was as taut as a fiddle string, then burned out. A few minutes later came the dying rumble of flying hoofs.

In half an hour Archer was free. That was nearly enough stuff for him. It had been routine ever since he nearly lost his life by being left behind in blithering Boxcar Bank.

Nobody ever noticed anything different about the boots Archer wore, but they were different. They were built to order with stiff, heavy leather collars; those ankles were stitched inside the ankles. No matter how tightly his ankles were bound, he could free himself by gradually working his feet out of his boots. It was painful, but it worked.

Once his feet were free, he found a sharp edge on a bent rail and began sawing on his wrist lashings. He was gratified to find that the hoggin'

straps had been tied so loosely they almost fell off.

He took precious time to search the cave, but failed to find a gun of any kind. On the far side of the little meadow in front, he discovered a pole corral holding three mustangs. Expertly fashioning a lassoo from a piece of the rope he had been tied with, he mounted bareback on a stocky bay gelding and shot through the corral leading toward the northeast, where lay Big Coulee and Crazy Man.

He rode like a maniac for Big Coulee, hurling the stocky bay recklessly down out of the dark foothills. Two images leapt flitting across his mind — the freckled face of Little Jeff McLeod, and the merciless eyes of the devil called "Cuchillo," the bandit who had boasted of having shot Little Jeff in the back.

The idea of riding to the Leaning G for help never even occurred to the racing outlaw hunter. One thought alone boiled in his aching head now — to get his steely fingers on Cuchillo's serrated throat. He had no gun, not even a saddle. But at he spotted the bay he planned.

He could strike big Coulee just about the time the rustled herd emerged from the dry bed of the Crazy Man. He had a hunch Cuchillo would be bringing up the drag — straying back where trouble would be most likely to occur. And that's exactly the way it was.

Mal was charging down the south slope of Big Coulee when he saw the leaders of a host of big stock come stragling down the north slope. A human centipede was riding point.

Mal struck him like an avalanche, horse and all. The hoister went sprawling from his saddle, his head striking a dull thump! The wagon flew from his holder and exploded when it struck. Another pounced on it and hopped onto the saddle of Beampole's buckskin.

The two riders on the right flank snarled and were spurring up the slope toward a piney thicket, flinging over their shoulders as they rode. The lone rider on the left flank cut straight through the herd and dashed up the slope after them, his carbine crackling. But, to his astonishment, Mal saw clearly by the direction of the carbine flame that the lone rider was firing at his companion! And he knocked them both from their saddles. Then he himself pitched over his horse's head.

Mal whirled. The rider who had been bringing up the drag whipped around the edge of the herd in a dark blur that spat lead. A slug burned past Archer's ribs. Another kicked in ear. His own six-gun roared. The

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outlaw leader grabbed wildly for the saddle horn, raised it, and parted company with his mount. Never, so long as he lived, would Mal Archer forget the sight of that unbolted figure hurling through the moonlight, to land with a sickening crash in a pile of stones. Mal turned his head and covered his eyes with his hand. His throat felt as if someone had strung a rawhide hand around it.

That hurtling figure was clothed in a woman's riding habit.

Mal couldn't clamp his hand tight enough to shut out the vision that was searing in his brain — a vision of a slim girl with glistening copper hair and eyes like still pools beneath mountain velvets. The man that came swelling through his clenched teeth helped to cross the pounding of approaching hoofbeats.

Mal jerked his hand away. He was surrounded by toothless riders on horses flocked with foam. He saw old Moss Goodnight drop cluminely from the saddle beside the crumpled figure in the cockpit, then stoopless as though he'd been stung by a yellow-jacket.

"I'll be a buck'ry-lagged ol' tumble-ugly!" exploded the older. "Look here!"

Mal was closest, and though his legs felt like rubber he was the first to reach the limp body old Moss had turned face up.

"Cochise!" repeated Mal.

"Who?" queried old Moss.

"Cochise!" repeated Mal. "Boss John of the Bullpups Meadows pack of early wolves."

"Cochise — my grandmother!" snorted old Moss derisively. "That's Tom Fawley!"

Mal felt a tiny hand work its way into his. He glanced down. The limped eyes of Mary Randall were pools of veiled light.

A gobble-eyed fat man waddled up beside old Moss. "When Mary come to me," he stammered, "and spilt the trooper, just before she and I rode out to your place tonight, Moss, I just couldn't believe Fawley had been pulling the wool over my eyes for 20 years." He stopped and peered down into Fawley's bronzed face. "That's Tom Fawley," he muttered. "But sure as my name's 'Duke Crowley' I'll never believe it."

Mary's tiny fingers tightened round one of Mal's. "Fawley forced me to point you out, Mal," she said with a catch in her voice, "by threatening to have Lurey hang for the murder of Jeff McLeod. Then, after I'd done it, I knew I couldn't do such a thing to you, not even to save Lurey from a hangman. So I told 'Uncle Crow' and he dashed out

to the leaning G to try to head you off."

"Soon as I got word of all that," cut in old Moss, "I sneaked me some skins close to home and went lookin' for Grizzly Peacock. When I couldn't locate him nor her of him, we all started hell-bent for Bullpups Meadows. That's how we came to be crossin'" the grades when the fire-works started."

"Little Jeff McLeod was the best friend I ever had, Mary," Mal said quietly. "Lurey didn't kill him. That lumpy of battered bark lying there buried Little Jeff. He boasted of it."

Mary gave a glad little cry, then instantly sobered. "Mal," she whispered brokenly, "did — did — ?"

"You all stand huddled a minute," Mal told them.

He wriggled across the saddle and knelt down in the shadow of a scrubby bush. Lurey Randall looked up at him with fleeted eyes,

"You Mal Archer?" he asked weakly.

"Yes, amigo," Goli said.

"So ride out to the hideout this evening," the youngster went on, "trying to get me away and wanting the riding habit and side saddle I stole from her when Fawley crept a good disguise and cut off my whisky money till I kicked in."

"So said you were her man. I imagined that off with my face — but not in my heart. That's how come I tied your wrists so loose. When the shooting started, I figured it must be you, so I done what I was able." His hand fell back limply over Mal's arm.

Archer climbed the slope and made sure Grizzly Peacock and "Patch" were dead. Then he rejoined the others and laid young Larry Randall's body gently on the ground.

"Mohayna it's better this way," he muttered. "But if Lurey hadn't acted me in the fight tonight, I'd be where he is."

Mary was going down wide-eyed on her brother. Mal swung on Crowley. "One thing's peculiar me some, Crowley," he said. "Moldo Spear's dying words was — 'He was skin lightning,' Crowley. How do you account for that?"

Duke Crowley's jaws quivered; "I was forever saying that tramp," he admitted, "telling him that on the draw he was slower'n a cow pulling her feet out of a bog. Redden it preyed on his mind."

But Mary Randall had had enough. She rolled against big Mal Archer's shoulder. He pulled her up, stepped into the saddle, and with Mary cradled gently in his arms headed for the Leaning G.

RIDDLE OF THE SEA SERPENT *Continued from page 32*

A popular one was that the serpent was really a long tubular piece of floating seaweed. The great naturalist Sir Richard Owen declared that Captain McQuhae had really seen a very large seal or sea-lion. Captain McQuhae wrote an indignant reply to this, which also appeared in *The Times*.

It is hard to escape the conclusion that Captain McQuhae and his crew really did see some monster unknown to science. It is difficult to credit a length of seaweed with a surface speed of 12 to 15 miles an hour, and a seal approaching a length of 60 feet — McQuhae's estimated minimum — would be a genuine monster itself.

There can be no doubt that the crew of the *Dreadnought* saw something, at any rate. Captains of the Royal Navy have never been in the habit of taking fancy stories to the Admiralty.

There are other cases where the monster in question showed itself to large numbers of witnesses. An instance like this occurred on the coast of Massachusetts in the northeast of the United States in 1817. It was seen over a period of several weeks by scores of people independently, including lawyers, fishermen, ministers, sea-captains, merchants, tradesmen and customs officers.

A committee set up by the Loyal Society of New England interviewed as many of these people as they could find, presenting them with a well-thought-out questionnaire on what they had seen. All agreed on the main features of the creature they claimed to have seen.

It looked like a huge snake, with smooth, almost black skin, and a whitish belly. It showed 40 or 50 feet of its length on the surface and must have been about 65 feet long overall. The visible part of its body was about a foot in diameter, and it always held its head up to a foot out of the water.

Some of the witnesses said it appeared to undulate vertically, unlike an ordinary snake which moves by twisting its body from side to side. They claimed that it could move at a speed of at least 30 to 35 knots — as fast as most whales. When it dived it went down suddenly, like a stone.

Once it appeared in Gloucester Roads, and four armed boats were sent to chase it. Matthew Godfrey, a ship's carpenter, fired at it with an 18-pound musket, and believed he hit it in the head. The serpent turned and dived at once, then reappeared

100 yards away and swam off.

The witnesses agreed that as a rule the sea-serpent did not seem to take much notice of boats. It was more in the least aggressive. They believed that it fed on small fish-like herrings, and was harmless to humans.

However, not all serpents have frequently had to face worse than a man with a musket. In July, 1893, Lieutenant Lagrenelle, the commander of the French gunboat *Avalanche* on the coast of Indo-China (now Vietnam), encountered two bulky, undulating monsters about 45 feet long. They dived and vanished when the *Avalanche* fired a gun.

The following February the *Avalanche* met some similar monsters. Lieutenant Lagrenelle opened fire on them with a quick-firing at a range of about 400 yards, and also tried to run one of them. This monster was faster than the gunboat and eventually escaped, although Lagrenelle succeeded in driving it into the shallows several times.

Lieutenant Lagrenelle was not the only one to suggest a sea-serpent in a naval action. On July 30, 1913, the German submarine U28 torpedoed the British gunboat *Hornet* in the North Atlantic. U28 surfaced, and her commander, Freiherr Georg Günther von Pritzel, and the officers of the watch were on the conning tower to observe the doomed ship's last moments.

About half a minute after the *Hornet*'s bows went under there was a violent explosion, and a gigantic sea-creature was blown out of the water along with fragments of wreckage. It was shaped like a crocodile with flat webbed feet, and looked about 60 feet long.

Even less fortunate was another 60-footer, this time with a long neck, which was sighted off Iceland in

1917 by the armed merchant cruiser HMS *Hilary*. Captain F. W. Dean decided to use it as a target for gunnery practice with the *Hilary*'s three 12-pounds.

The monster was hit on the third shot, and thrashed in apparent agony for a few seconds before sinking. Justice was served a few days later, when a U boat torpedoed and sank the *Hilary*.

The Loch Ness Monster has all the characteristics of a sea-serpent, but it is hard to claim it as one since it lives far inland in fresh water. However, there is a similar case of a salt-water monster appearing to numbers of people over a period of several decades in one particular locality.

This monster was seen on the west coast of Canada in 1932, in the straits between the city of Vancouver and Vancouver Island. Witnesses said it appeared to be about 80 ft long, and shaped more like a lizard than a snake. About 100 people reported seeing it, including three ship-captains and an air-mail pilot.

The local newspaper christened the monster "cadborosaurus", from the nearby town of Cadboro. It was learned that the Chinook Indians of the area had apparently known of the monster for centuries, calling it *haabuckalak*.

The *cadborosaurus*, or another of its tribe, was reported in the same area after World War II. Judge James Thomas Brown, President of the King's Bench of Saskatchewan, saw it again in 1950.

Sometimes sea-serpents even enter the orbits of heads of state. On June 2, 1877, a serpentine with huge turtle-like flippers and a head shaped like a staff was seen off the north coast of Sicily by HMS *Osborne*, Queen Victoria's royal yacht. It measured about 50 feet from the crown of its head to the shoulder



"Speak for yourself! . . . the excitement hasn't left my marriage!"

behind the flippers, and appeared to have a row of fins down its back.

Four of the Captain's officers saw it — but not the Queen, which was a pity. She would probably have made a good witness. However, her grandson, the Duke of Clarence, later King George V, was boating. He sighted one from HMS *Bacchante* four years later when he was a midshipman on a training cruise.

Another monster has been reported from time to time over San Clemente, California — recently known as the site of President Nixon's "Summer White House". It has a thick 10-foot neck and gives the appearance of having a massive body under the water.

Believers in sea-serpents come in two varieties: those who simply believe it is likely that there are some kinds of huge sea-creatures still unknown to science, and those who have detailed theories to explain what exactly the creatures are. Skeptical opponents of sea-serpents, however, believe that all sea-serpent reports can be explained away as faulty observation or hoaxes.

The favorite argument against the existence of sea-serpents is the fact that no authentic serpent remains have yet been presented by scientists. Huge carcasses of mangy form have been found from time to time, but all of them have turned out to be ribbon fish, basking sharks or whales.

In the autumn of 1868, British scientists thought that they had the real McCoy for the first time. A snake-like body 23 feet long was found cast up on the island of Stroma in the Orkneys. Witnesses described it as having ten legs, a small head on a very long neck and a long winding tail like a board's. A narrow hairy coat ran along its spine to the end of its tail.

The Scottish islanders were thorough in their examination of the rotting remains. Besides measuring it, they cut open its stomach and looked inside, and removed various parts of it — the skull, a lung and part of the spinal column — before the carcass broke up in a storm. These remains were forwarded to the Edinburgh Natural History Society.

The members of the Society supposed that they had solved the riddle of the sea-serpent's identity. Dr Edward Home, a London surgeon and naturalist, identified the remains from their description as those of a huge basking shark, a whale-sized monster feeding on plankton. Home pointed out that the "Stroma beast's" bones were flexible like a shark's, not hard and rigid like those of a fish or a reptile. The six

limbs were really six four-belly fins and the double reproductive organs. Decomposition made it appear to be long and thin.

Basking shark remains have been the long-term favorites for mistaken identifications of sea-serpents. This is mainly due to the spread of a popular theory which argues that sea-serpents do exist, and are survivors of the plesiosaur plesiosaur, a form of giant marine reptile with a smooth-skinned, turtle-shaped body and a very long neck, extinct for 70 million years.

A plesiosaur looked nothing like a basking shark. But when a basking shark dies and its body rots, at an early stage its huge lower jaw and gills come away. This leaves a tiny skull at the end of a long spinal column which looks like a tiny neck. All the plesiosaur remains so far have turned out to be sharks in this condition.

But this cannot be taken as proof that real plesiosaur don't still exist. The Dundee sea-serpent might have been one with its body submerged. So might the one which was sunk by HMS *Hiray*. So might the "old-horned" creature?

Another popular theory is that sea-serpents are really just gigantic fish. This is supported by solid evidence, too. In 1930, seafarers on an expedition in the South Atlantic dredged up an oil lamp 4 feet long. The adult stage of such an oil could measure over 100 feet. That could also account for the Dundee monster, seen at the same waters.

There are other theories which advance the case for giant cephalopods, giant long-necked mammals like seals and giant squid seen from unusual angles. Dr Bernhard Heuvelmans, probably the greatest living authority on sea-serpent lore, has grouped all the available honest descriptions into nine categories, such as a creature of a different form — long-necked, many-humped, mercurous, many-faced, superciliar, superciliated, giant turtle, giant crocodile and yellow-belly.

Dr Heuvelmans regards the existence of the giant turtle and yellow-belly as doubtful. He believes that the super-ciliated — possibly what the Dundee sighted — is a fish, the giant crocodile (as reported by U28) a reptile with fins, and the find in the oil are all mammals. He has suggested that the long-necked kind is really a giant type of seal with a shape resembling a tallish plesiosaur, and that the other four are possible survivors of prehistoric whales. Dr Heuvelmans has gone so far as to assign provisional scientific Latin names to several of them.

Dr Heuvelmans is trying to correct the approach of a previous unscientific expert, Dr A. C. Odenskjöld, who declared that there was only one kind of unknown monster — a gigantic long-necked seal-like animal, which he christened *Nesophisus*. Dr Odenskjöld decided that all genuine sea-serpent sightings referred to this animal, and those which differed were the result of inaccurate observation.

Whether or not you choose to go along with the model of submarine giants proposed by Dr Odenskjöld, it is a known fact that there are huge sea-creatures of a less controversial form which have not yet been fully described by scientists. Dr Edward Wilson, who perished with Captain Scott on his journey back from the South Pole in 1912, saw an unknown kind of large whale with a very high, narrow dorsal fin when he was in the Antarctic in 1902. No census of this whale has yet been described. Some kinds of large beaked whale have been sighted but never killed.

The visual evidence for the existence of these whales is a lot scarcer than that for the sea-serpent. But nobody has bothered to cast doubt on the whale's reality. There is no need to be dogmatic about the possible identity of sea-serpents on the evidence available, but it is surely only fair to accept the word of at least some of the people who have reported them.

Dr Heuvelmans could well be right when he suggests that there is more than one kind of unknown monster. The descriptions vary too much for a single creature to fulfill them all. Of course, some might be imaginary but not all of them.

There is still plenty of room for monsters in the world's oceans. Merchant ships have stuck to well-defined shipping lanes in the steam age, and there are vast areas of sea which nowadays are seldom crossed by a boat. And men have hardly begun yet to explore properly in the shadowy depths beyond the continental shelves. When they do they sometimes dredge up a fish like the ocellonthus, discovered 20 years ago after being known only as a fossil 70 million years old.

There are hundreds of reports of sightings to go through, and you can form any number of theories. You can believe in seals, seals, plesiosaur, or whatever you like. What all the evidence is weighed — even just the crests of it, from the best witnesses — there's too much to ignore. They can't all be wrong. There must be something out there.

